

Sovereign Order of the Elder Brethren Rose Cross

Founded by Pope John XXII of Avignon (France) in 1317

Philippus-Laurentius, Grand Master (1975-)

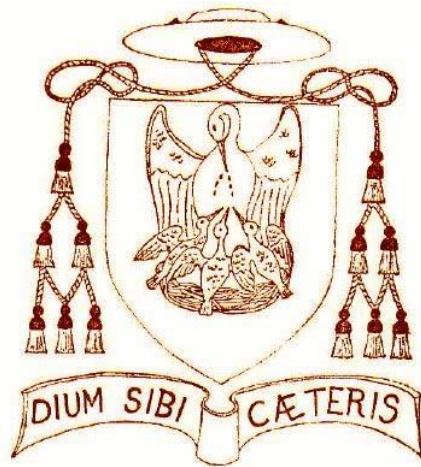


Baphomet Veneration among the Crusaders

(Illustrated Story)

Sovereign Order of the Elder Brethren Rose ✡ Cross

Founded by Pope John XXII of Avignon (France) in 1317



Baphomet Veneration among the Crusaders

(Illustrated Story)

by

Philippe L. De Coster, B.Th., D.D.

Grand Master O.S.F.A.R. ✡ C

© May 2013 – O.S.F.A.R. ✡ C - Ghent, Belgium

Non-Commercial Publication

Preface

Violence has always been approved by society and greatly supported by the Abrahamic Religions and World Faiths, and as such having a commonplace in our civilised communities. The Crusades represent one manifestation of this phenomenon. The Crusades were wars justified by faith conducted against real or imagined enemies defined by religious and political elites in common agreement. The religious beliefs crucial to such warfare placed enormous significance on imagined awesome but reassuring supernatural forces of overwhelming power and proximity that were nevertheless expressed in hard concrete physical acts: prayer, penance, giving alms, attending church, pilgrimage and violence. Crusading reflected a social mentality founded in war as a central force protection, arbitration, social discipline, political expression and above all material gain on all sides. The Crusades confirmed a communal identity compromising aggression, paranoia, nostalgia, wishful thinking and invented history. Understood by the participants as a statement of Christian charity (?), religious devotion and godly savagery, the “wars of the cross” helped fashion for adherents as a shared sense of belonging to a said Christian society. Above all, “Christendom” contributed to setting its bloodlust and geographic frontiers. In these ways, the Crusades helped define the nature of Europe, and later the whole White and Latinos world. As such the Crusades were controversial and contentious far beyond the academic communities. Many groups and nations find their memory awkward, and distressing. Let us remember the massacres of Palestinian Muslims during the Crusades by the Jews at Jerusalem in 1099, and that is yesterday, and it has not ceased even today in 2013. The Greek in Constantinople (1204) were butchering too. Also the Rhineland Jews in 1096 or 1146. The defeats of Latin Christians by great Islamic leaders as Saladin and Baibars. The expulsion of Western conquerors from the mainland of Western Asia in 1291; and, the long triumphs of the Christians in Iberia, of the Germans in the Eastern Baltic or the Turks in Asia Minor, the Balkans and the Eastern Mediterranean; all these aspects of crusading history have left a residue of resentment, pain, anger, guilt but also pride, depending on which legacy. The cost of Western and Eastern warriors, men and horses was high. In Europe and Western Asia, money payment for fighting and killing on campaigns was common, as were longer-term rewards, such as land, titles and the consequent social privileges and status. Like in the fundamental Islam today, Christianity also promised “heaven” or “paradise” to soldiers killed in battle. The human has not changed at all in spite of the contradicting slogan “God is Love” as Christianity preaches. Luckily, there is today the collapse of religious institutions in the whole Western world. Humanity thinks differently today.

Philippus-Laurentius, Grand Master

Brief History of the Crusades through a Different Eye

The Baphomet and the Templars

Central to the accusations brought against the Knights Templar was that they worshipped an idol, said to have taken the form of a head or sometimes a black cat. The Fifth category of accusations states that *the brethren practiced idol worship of a cat or a head.*

Although the popular mythology related to the Templars gives this idol the name of Baphomet, the fact remains that in all the testimonies against the Templars, the term Baphomet was used but twice.

That this one aspect of the Templars mythos, could generate so many theories as to its true origins is amazing. The interest in the Baphomet has survived over six-hundred years and taken many forms. The opinions on the Baphomet vary greatly from scholar to scholar and mystic path to mystic path. The purpose of this section is to shed some light on some of the theories and the connection, if any, to the Knights Templar.

One thing that is certain is that writers of the nineteenth century were prone to believe that the Templars were Devil worshipping Occultists, while historians of the twentieth century were of the belief that the Templars were party to the machinations of a corrupt government and church. It remains to be seen what the common consensus of this century will be regarding the order. While twentieth century historians may have believed in their innocence, the Baphomet mythos did survive. This is indicated by the following dictionary definition:

“Baphomet was the deity worshipped by the Knights Templar, and in Black Magic as the source and creator of evil; the Satanic goat of the witches’ Sabbath and one of the names adopted by Aleister Crowley.”

(Dictionary Of The Occult And Supernatural by Peter Underwood.)

Theories on the etymology of the Baphomet are many. To some it is believed to be a corruption of the Moslem prophet “Mahomet” or in English Mohammed. The Templars fought along side Moslem Assassins during their time and it is held that they may have adopted Islamic beliefs. This doesn’t really hold water to anyone familiar with Islam as the religion forbids all forms of idolatry.

Another train of thought is that Baphomet is really a joining of two Greek words meaning absorption into wisdom. In either case the fact remains that the

Templars were accused of practicing their initiations and rituals in front of a large idol of the demon Baphomet.

How did this belief come to be? Since King Philip of France sought to own the vast Templar wealth, he along with his puppet Pope Clement V had the Templars captured and tortured. During these tortures they made many confessions, among these, the disclosure that they had worshipped an idol said to be the Baphomet. Were these claims true? Perhaps we'll never know. Jacques de Molay, who had earlier confessed his and the Templars guilt slowly burned at the stake insisting the order was innocent of all but one offence, that of allowing torture to cause them to lie and confess untruths.

Misconceptions about the Crusades Clarified

Misconceptions about the Crusades are all too common, and various authors write different historical accounts. The Crusades are generally portrayed as a series of holy wars against Islam led by **power-mad popes and fought by dangerous religious fanatics**. They are supposed to have been the epitome of self-righteousness and intolerance, a black stain on the history of the Catholic Church in particular and Western civilization in general, and forever imprinted in world history and in the modern mind thinking differently about religion. A breed of proto-imperialists, the Crusaders introduced Western aggression to the peaceful Middle East and then deformed the enlightened Muslim culture, leaving it in ruins. For variations on this theme, one need not look far. See, for example, Steven Runciman's famous three-volume epic, *History of the Crusades*, or the BBC/A&E documentary, *The Crusades*, hosted by Terry Jones. Both are terrible history yet wonderfully entertaining.

So what is the truth about the Crusades? Scholars are still working some of that out. But much can already be said with certainty. For starters, the Crusades to the East were in every way defensive wars. They were a direct response to Muslim aggression—an attempt to turn back or defend against Muslim conquests of Christian lands.

Christians in the eleventh century were not paranoid fanatics. Muslims really were gunning for them. While Muslims can be peaceful, Islam was born in war and grew the same way. From the time of Mohammed, the means of Muslim expansion was always the sword. Muslim thought divides the world into two spheres, the Abode of Islam and the Abode of War. Christianity—and for that matter any other non-Muslim religion—has no abode. Christians and Jews can be tolerated within a Muslim state under Muslim rule. But, in traditional Islam, Christian and Jewish states must be destroyed and their lands conquered. When Mohammed was waging war against Mecca in the seventh century, Christianity was the dominant religion of power and wealth. As the faith of the Roman

Empire, it spanned the entire Mediterranean, including the Middle East, where it was born. The Christian world, therefore, was a prime target for the earliest caliphs, and it would remain so for Muslim leaders for the next thousand years.

With enormous energy, the warriors of Islam struck out against the Christians shortly after Mohammed's death. They were extremely successful. Palestine, Syria, and Egypt—once the most heavily Christian areas in the world—quickly succumbed, and today those countries are any better. By the eighth century, Muslim armies had conquered all of Christian North Africa and Spain. In the eleventh century, the Seljuk Turks conquered Asia Minor (modern Turkey), which had been Christian since the time of apostle Paul. The old Roman Empire, known to modern historians as the Byzantine Empire, was reduced to little more than Greece. In desperation, the emperor in Constantinople sent word to the Christians of Western Europe asking them to aid their brothers and sisters in the East.

That is what gave birth to the Crusades. They were not the brainchild of an ambitious pope or rapacious knights but a response to more than four centuries of conquests in which Muslims had already captured two-thirds of the old Christian world. At some point, Christianity as a faith and a culture had to defend itself or be subsumed by Islam. The Crusades were that defense.

Pope Urban II called upon the knights of Christendom to push back the conquests of Islam at the Council of Clermont in 1095. The response was tremendous. Many thousands of warriors took the vow of the cross and prepared for war. Why did they do it? The answer to that question has been badly misunderstood. In the wake of the Enlightenment, it was usually asserted that Crusaders were merely lack lands and ne'er-do-wells who took advantage of an opportunity to rob and pillage in a faraway land. **The Crusaders' expressed sentiments of piety, self-sacrifice, and love for God were obviously not to be taken seriously. They were only a front for darker designs.**

The last two decades, scholars have discovered that crusading knights were generally wealthy men with plenty of their own land in Europe. Nevertheless, they willingly gave up everything to undertake the holy mission. Crusading was not cheap. Even wealthy lords could easily impoverish themselves and their families by joining a Crusade. They did so not because they expected material wealth (which many of them had already) but because they hoped to store up treasure where rust and moth could not corrupt. They were keenly aware of their sinfulness and eager to undertake the hardships of the Crusade as a penitential act of charity and love. Europe is littered with thousands of medieval charters attesting to these sentiments, charters in which these men still speak to us today if we will listen. Of course, they were not opposed to capturing booty if it could

be had. But the truth is that the Crusades were notoriously bad for plunder. A few people got rich, but the vast majority returned with nothing.

Urban II gave the Crusaders two goals, both of which would remain central to the eastern Crusades for centuries. The first was to rescue the Christians of the East. As his successor, Pope Innocent III, later wrote:

How does a man love according to divine precept his neighbour as himself when, knowing that his Christian brothers in faith and in name are held by the perfidious Muslims in strict confinement and weighed down by the yoke of heaviest servitude, he does not devote himself to the task of freeing them? ...Is it by chance that you do not know that many thousands of Christians are bound in slavery and imprisoned by the Muslims, tortured with innumerable torments?

"Crusading," was understood as an "an act of love"—in this case, the love of one's neighbour. The Crusade was seen as an errand of mercy to right a terrible wrong. As Pope Innocent III wrote to the Knights Templar, "You carry out in deeds the words of the Gospel, 'Greater love than this hath no man, that he lay down his life for his friends.'"

The second goal was the liberation of Jerusalem and the other places made holy by the life of Christ. The word crusade is modern. Medieval Crusaders saw themselves as pilgrims, performing acts of righteousness on their way to the Holy Sepulchre. The Crusade indulgence they received was canonically related to the pilgrimage indulgence. This goal was frequently described in feudal terms. When calling the Fifth Crusade in 1215, Innocent III wrote:

Consider most dear sons, consider carefully that if any temporal king was thrown out of his domain and perhaps captured, would he not, when he was restored to his pristine liberty and the time had come for dispensing justice look on his vassals as unfaithful and traitors...unless they had committed not only their property but also their persons to the task of freeing him? ...And similarly will not Jesus Christ, the king of kings and lord of lords, whose servant you cannot deny being, who joined your soul to your body, who redeemed you with the Precious Blood...condemn you for the vice of ingratitude and the crime of infidelity if you neglect to help Him?

The reconquest of Jerusalem, therefore, was not colonialism but an act of restoration and an open declaration of one's love of God. Medieval men knew, of course, that God had the power to restore Jerusalem Himself indeed, He had the power to restore the whole world to His rule. Yet as St. Bernard of Clairvaux preached, His refusal to do so was a blessing to His people:

Again I say, consider the Almighty's goodness and pay heed to His plans of mercy. He puts Himself under obligation to you, or rather feigns to do so, that He can help you to satisfy your obligations toward Himself.... I call blessed the generation that can seize an opportunity of such rich indulgence as this.

It is often assumed that the central goal of the Crusades was forced conversion of the Muslim world. Nothing could be further from the truth. From the perspective of medieval Christians, Muslims were the enemies of Christ and His Church. It was the Crusaders' task to defeat and defend against them. That was all. Muslims who lived in Crusader-won territories were generally allowed to retain their property and livelihood, and always their religion. Indeed, throughout the history of the Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem, Muslim inhabitants far outnumbered the Catholics. It was not until the 13th century that the Franciscans began conversion efforts among Muslims. But these were mostly unsuccessful and finally abandoned. In any case, such efforts were by peaceful persuasion, not the threat of violence.

The Crusades were wars, so it would be a mistake to characterize them as nothing but piety and good intentions. Like all warfare, the violence was brutal (although not as brutal as modern wars). There were mishaps, blunders, and crimes. These are usually well-remembered today. During the early days of the First Crusade in 1095, a ragtag band of Crusaders led by Count Emicho of Leiningen made its way down the Rhine, robbing and murdering all the Jews they could find. Without success, the local bishops attempted to stop the carnage. In the eyes of these warriors, the Jews, like the Muslims, were the enemies of Christ. Plundering and killing them, then, was no vice. Indeed, they believed it was a righteous deed, since the Jews' money could be used to fund the Crusade to Jerusalem. But they were wrong, and the Church strongly condemned the anti-Jewish attacks.

Fifty years later, when the Second Crusade was gearing up, Saint Bernard frequently preached that the Jews were not to be persecuted:

Ask anyone who knows the Sacred Scriptures what he finds foretold of the Jews in the Psalm. "Not for their destruction do I pray," it says. The Jews are for us the living words of Scripture, for they remind us always of what our Lord suffered.... Under Christian princes they endure a hard captivity, but "they only wait for the time of their deliverance."

Nevertheless, a fellow Cistercian monk named Radulf stirred up people against the Rhineland Jews, despite numerous letters from Bernard demanding that he stop. At last Bernard was forced to travel to Germany himself, where he caught up with Radulf, sent him back to his convent, and ended the massacres.

It is often said that the roots of the Holocaust can be seen in these medieval pogroms. That may be. But if so, those roots are far deeper and more widespread than the Crusades. Jews perished during the Crusades, but the purpose of the Crusades was not to kill Jews. Quite the contrary: Popes, bishops, and preachers made it clear that the Jews of Europe were to be left unmolested. In a modern war, we call tragic deaths like these "collateral damage." Even with smart technologies, the United States has killed far more innocents in our wars than the Crusaders ever could. But no one would seriously argue that the purpose of American wars is to kill women and children.

By any reckoning, the First Crusade was a long shot. There was no leader, no chain of command, no supply lines, no detailed strategy. It was simply thousands of warriors marching deep into enemy territory, committed to a common cause. Many of them died, either in battle or through disease or starvation. It was a rough campaign, one that seemed always on the brink of disaster. Yet it was miraculously successful. By 1098, the Crusaders had restored Nicaea and Antioch to Christian rule. In July 1099, they conquered Jerusalem and began to build a Christian state in Palestine. The joy in Europe was unbridled. It seemed that the tide of history, which had lifted the Muslims to such heights, was now turning.

But it was not. When we think about the Medieval Ages, it is easy to view Europe in light of what it became rather than what it was. The colossus of the medieval world was Islam, not Christendom. The Crusades are interesting largely because they were an attempt to counter that trend. But in five centuries of crusading, it was only the First Crusade that significantly rolled back the military progress of Islam. It was downhill from there.

When the Crusader County of Edessa fell to the Turks and Kurds in 1144, there was an enormous groundswell of support for a new Crusade in Europe. It was led by two kings, Louis VII of France and Conrad III of Germany, and preached by Saint Bernard himself. It failed miserably. Most of the Crusaders were killed along the way. Those who made it to Jerusalem only made things worse by attacking Muslim Damascus, which formerly had been a strong ally of the Christians. In the wake of such a disaster, Christians across Europe were forced to accept not only the continued growth of Muslim power but the certainty that God was punishing the West for its sins. Lay piety movements sprouted up throughout Europe, all rooted in the desire to purify Christian society so that it might be worthy of victory in the East.

Crusading in the late twelfth century, therefore, became a total war effort. Every person, no matter how weak or poor, was called to help. Warriors were asked to sacrifice their wealth and, if need be, their lives for the defense of the Christian East. On the home front, all Christians were called to support the Crusades

through prayer, fasting, and alms. Yet still the Muslims grew in strength. Saladin, the great unifier, had forged the Muslim Near East into a single entity, all the while preaching jihad against the Christians. In 1187 at the Battle of Hattin, his forces wiped out the combined armies of the Christian Kingdom of Jerusalem and captured the precious relic of the True Cross. Defenceless, the Christian cities began surrendering one by one, culminating in the surrender of Jerusalem on October 2. Only a tiny handful of ports held out.

The response was the Third Crusade. It was led by Emperor Frederick I Barbarossa of the German Empire, King Philip II Augustus of France, and King Richard I Lionheart of England. By any measure it was a grand affair, although not quite as grand as the Christians had hoped. The aged Frederick drowned while crossing a river on horseback, so his army returned home before reaching the Holy Land. Philip and Richard came by boat, but their incessant bickering only added to an already divisive situation on the ground in Palestine. After recapturing Acre, the king of France went home, where he busied himself carving up Richard's French holdings. The Crusade, therefore, fell into Richard's lap. A skilled warrior, gifted leader, and superb tactician, Richard led the Christian forces to victory after victory, eventually reconquering the entire coast. But Jerusalem was not on the coast, and after two abortive attempts to secure supply lines to the Holy City, Richard at last gave up. Promising to return one day, he struck a truce with Saladin that ensured peace in the region and free access to Jerusalem for unarmed pilgrims. But it was a bitter pill to swallow. The desire to restore Jerusalem to Christian rule and regain the True Cross remained intense throughout Europe.

The Crusades of the thirteenth century were larger, better funded, and better organized. But they too failed. The Fourth Crusade (1201-1204) ran aground when it was seduced into a web of Byzantine politics, which the Westerners never fully understood. They had made a detour to Constantinople to support an imperial claimant who promised great rewards and support for the Holy Land. Yet once he was on the throne of the Caesars, their benefactor found that he could not pay what he had promised. Thus betrayed by their Greek friends, in 1204 the Crusaders attacked, captured, and brutally sacked Constantinople, the greatest Christian city in the world. Pope Innocent III, who had previously excommunicated the entire Crusade, strongly denounced the Crusaders. But there was little else he could do. The tragic events of 1204 closed an iron door between Roman Catholic and Greek Orthodox, a door that even today Pope John Paul II has been unable to reopen. It is a terrible irony that the Crusades, which were a direct result of the Catholic desire to rescue the Orthodox people, drove the two further—and perhaps irrevocably—apart.

The remainder of the thirteenth century's Crusades did little better. The Fifth Crusade (1217-1221) managed briefly to capture Damietta in Egypt, but the Muslims eventually defeated the army and reoccupied the city. St. Louis IX of France led two Crusades in his life. The first also captured Damietta, but Louis was quickly outwitted by the Egyptians and forced to abandon the city. Although Louis was in the Holy Land for several years, spending freely on defensive works, he never achieved his fondest wish: to free Jerusalem. He was a much older man in 1270 when he led another Crusade to Tunis, where he died of a disease that ravaged the camp. After St. Louis's death, the ruthless Muslim leaders, Baybars and Kalavun, waged a brutal jihad against the Christians in Palestine. By 1291, the Muslim forces had succeeded in killing or ejecting the last of the Crusaders, thus erasing the Crusader kingdom from the map. Despite numerous attempts and many more plans, Christian forces were never again able to gain a foothold in the region until the 19th century.

One might think that three centuries of Christian defeats would have soured Europeans on the idea of Crusade. Not at all. In one sense, they had little alternative. Muslim kingdoms were becoming more, not less, powerful in the 14th, 15th, and 16th centuries. The Ottoman Turks conquered not only their fellow Muslims, thus further unifying Islam, but also continued to press westward, capturing Constantinople and plunging deep into Europe itself. By the 15th century, the Crusades were no longer errands of mercy for a distant people but desperate attempts of one of the last remnants of Christendom to survive. Europeans began to ponder the real possibility that Islam would finally achieve its aim of conquering the entire Christian world. One of the great best-sellers of the time, Sebastian Brant's *The Ship of Fools*, gave voice to this sentiment in a chapter titled "Of the Decline of the Faith":

*Our faith was strong in th' Orient,
It ruled in all of Asia,
In Moorish lands and Africa.
But now for us these lands are gone
'T would even grieve the hardest stone....
Four sisters of our Church you find,
They're of the patriarchal kind:
Constantinople, Alexandria,
Jerusalem, Antiochia.
But they've been forfeited and sacked
And soon the head will be attacked.*

Of course, that is not what happened. But it very nearly did. In 1480, Sultan Mehmed II captured Otranto as a beachhead for his invasion of Italy. Rome was evacuated. Yet the sultan died shortly thereafter, and his plan died with him. In

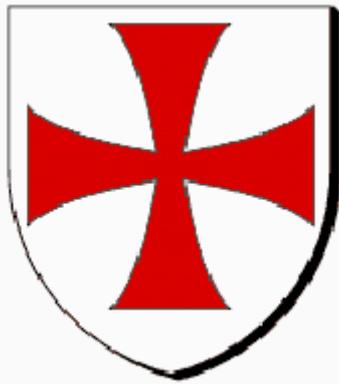
1529, Suleiman the Magnificent laid siege to Vienna. If not for a run of freak rainstorms that delayed his progress and forced him to leave behind much of his artillery, it is virtually certain that the Turks would have taken the city. Germany, then, would have been at their mercy. (At that point crusades were no longer waged to rescue Jerusalem, but Europe itself.)

Yet, even while these close shaves were taking place, something else was brewing in Europe—something unprecedented in human history. The Renaissance, born from a strange mixture of Roman values, medieval piety, and a unique respect for commerce and entrepreneurialism, had led to other movements like humanism, the Scientific Revolution, and the Age of Exploration. Even while fighting for its life, Europe was preparing to expand on a global scale. The Protestant Reformation, which rejected the papacy and the doctrine of indulgence, made Crusades unthinkable for many Europeans, thus leaving the fighting to the Catholics. In 1571, a Holy League, which was itself a Crusade, defeated the Ottoman fleet at Lepanto. Yet military victories like that remained rare. The Muslim threat was neutralized economically. As Europe grew in wealth and power, the once awesome and sophisticated Turks began to seem backward and pathetic—no longer worth a Crusade. The "Sick Man of Europe" limped along until the 20th century, when he finally expired, leaving behind the present mess of the modern Middle East.

From the safe distance of many centuries, it is easy enough to scowl in disgust at the Crusades. Religion, after all, is nothing to fight wars over. But we should be mindful that our medieval ancestors would have been equally disgusted by our infinitely more destructive wars fought in the name of political ideologies. And yet, both the medieval and the modern soldier fight ultimately for their own world and all that makes it up. Both are willing to suffer enormous sacrifice, provided that it is in the service of something they hold dear, something greater than themselves. Whether we admire the Crusaders or not, it is a fact that the world we know today would not exist without their efforts. The ancient faith of Christianity, with its respect for women and antipathy toward slavery, not only survived but flourished. Without the Crusades, it might well have followed Zoroastrianism, another of Islam's rivals, into extinction.

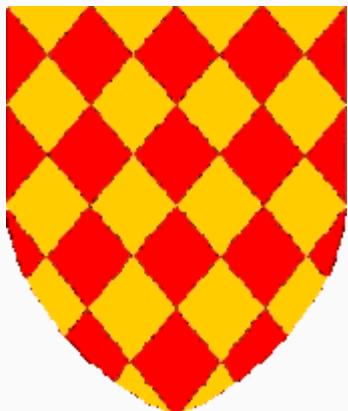
Shields of Knights before they became Grand Masters

Hugues de Payns

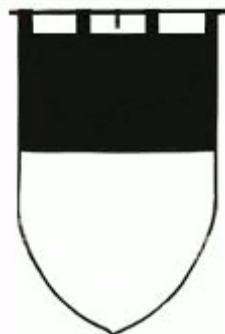


1119 - 1136

Robert de Craon



1136 - 1147



Evrard des Barres

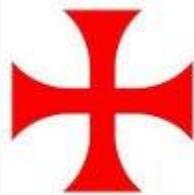


1147 - 1150

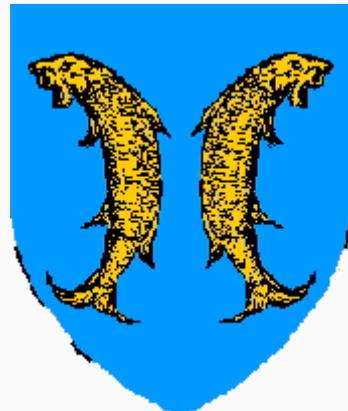
Bernard de Tramelay



1151 - 1153

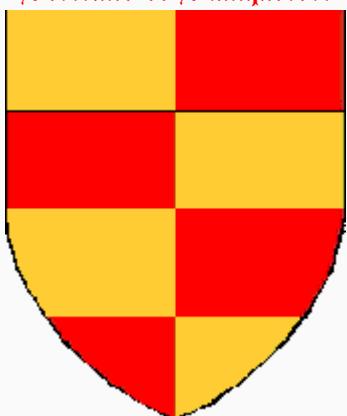


André de Montbard

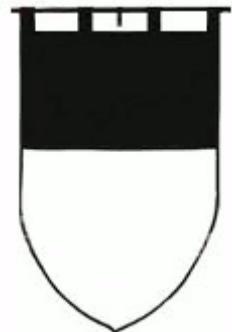


1154 - 1156

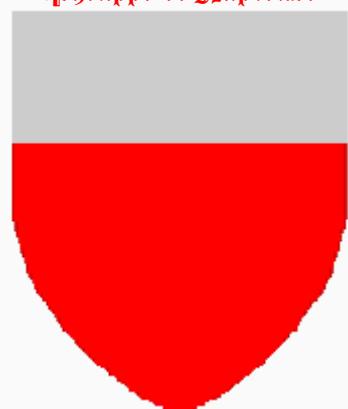
Bertrand de Blanquefort



1156 - 1169

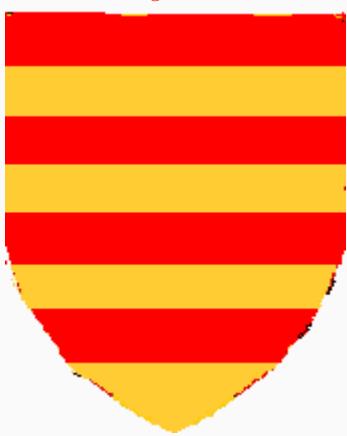


Philippe de Naplouse



1169 - 1170

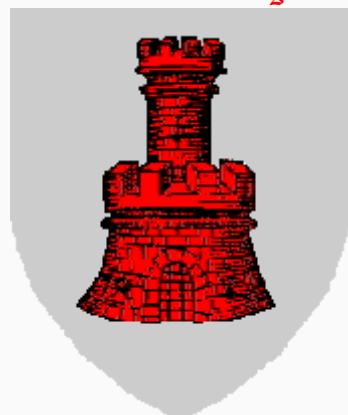
Odon-de-Saint-Amant



1170 - 1179



Arnaud de Toroge



1181 - 1184

Gérard de Ridesfort



1188 - 1189



Robert de Sable



1191 - 1193

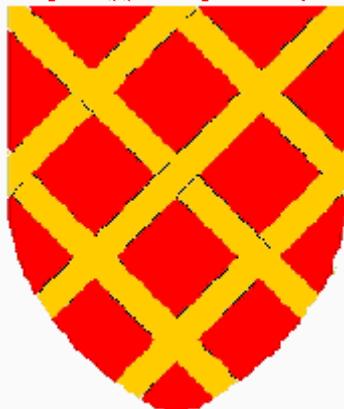
Gilbert Erail



1193 - 1200

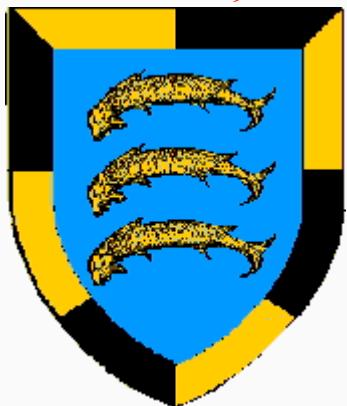


Philippe du Plaissiez



1201 - 1209

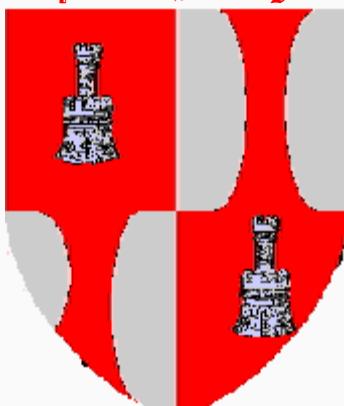
Guillaume de Chartres



1210 - 1218

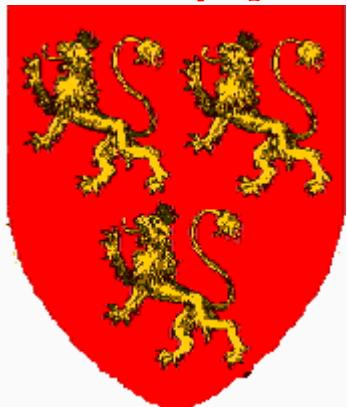


Pierre de Montaigu



1219 - 1232

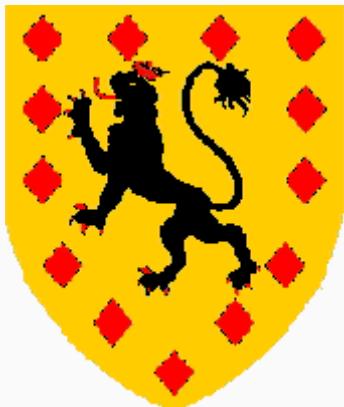
Armand de Périgord



1232 - 1244

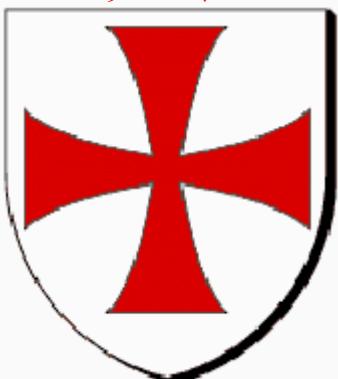


Guillaume de Sonnac

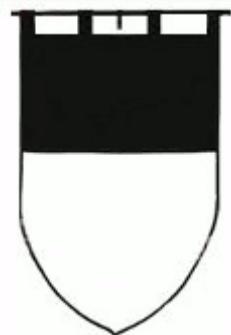


1247 - 1250

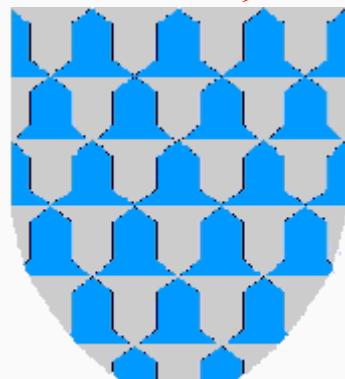
Richard de Bures



1244 - 1247



Renaud de Vichiers



1250 - 1252

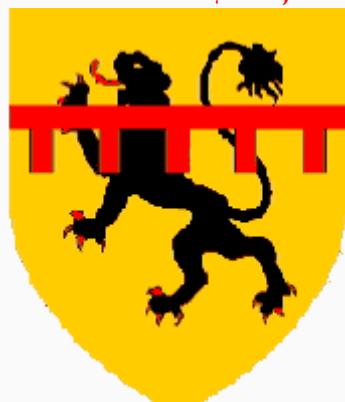
Thomas Bérard



1252 - 1273

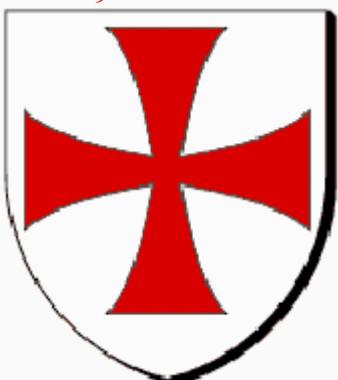


Guillaume de Beaujeu

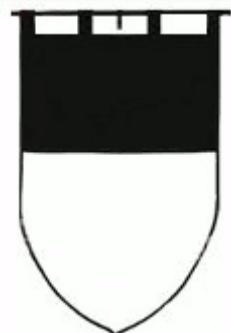


1273 - 1291

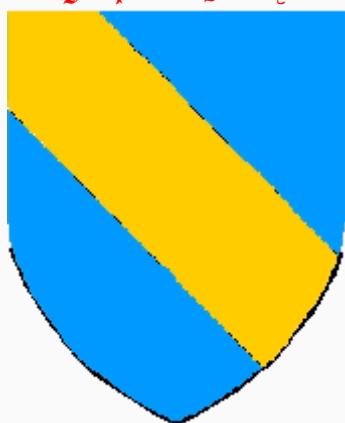
Thibaud Gaudin



1291 - 1292



Jacques de Molay



1293 - 1314



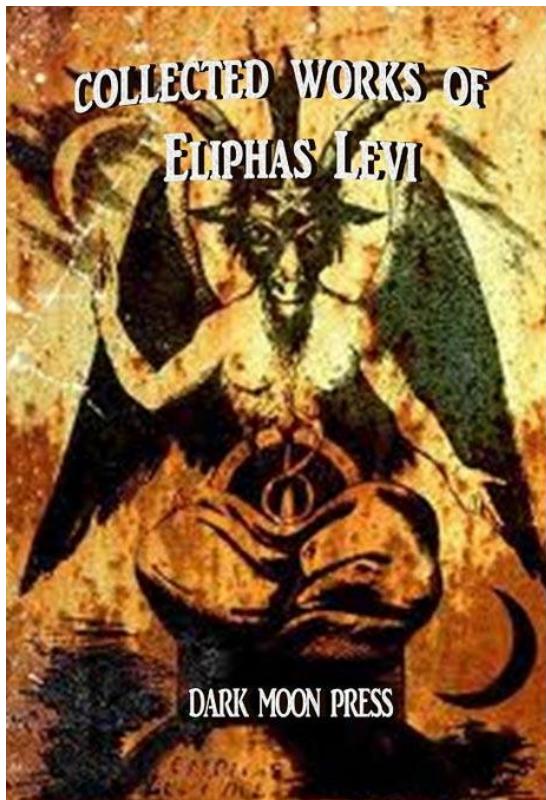
Baphomet

is an enigmatic, goat-headed figure found in several instances in the history of Occultism.

From the Knights Templar of the Middle-Ages and the Freemasons of the 19th century to modern currents of Satanism and Occultism.

The most famous depiction of Baphomet is found in Eliphas Levi's (left) "Dogme et Rituel de la Haute Magie", a 1897 book that became a standard reference for modern occultism.

© April 2013 – Sovereign Order of the Elder Brethren Rose + Cross,
Philippe L. De Coster, B.Th., D.D., Gent, Belgium.



Levi, Eliphas (1810-1875)

The pseudonym for Alphonse Louis Constant, a French occultist who is credited for reviving interest in magic in the 19th century.

Although Levi studied magic, he was considered to be more of a commentator on the subject than an adept even though he professed to have practiced necromancy several times.

Being born in Paris, Constant was the son of a shoemaker. He showed intelligence and was educated at the church of St. Sulpice. As a young boy he quickly became intrigued with magic and the occult. Also encouraging this curiosity was his head master's concept of animal magnetism, in which the man claimed that the vital energy of the body was controlled by the Devil. Nonetheless, Constant pursued the ecclesiastical studies and became a priest, however short lived.



His career in the priesthood was short lived because of his left-winged political writings and he found it impossible to keep his vow of chastity. For his writings he served three short jail sentences. He was quickly attracted to an eccentric, old man named Ganneau, who said he was prophet and the reincarnation of Louis XVIII. Constant became a follower of Ganneau and was drawn deeper into the worlds of magic and the occult.

He married Noémie Cadot, no older than 18, in 1846. The one daughter from the marriage died very young. The marriage broke up in 1853 and was annulled in 1865. For a time Constant lived from his writings and giving lessons in the occult. It was during this time he took the name of Magus Eliphas Levi, the Hebrew equivalents of his first and middle names.



Agios Θ Baphomet

Baphomet is a composite creation symbolic of alchemical realization through the union of opposite forces. Occultists believe that, through the mastery of life force, one is able to produce magick and spiritual enlightenment. Eliphas Levi's depiction of Baphomet included several symbols alluding to the raising of the kundalini – serpentine power – which ultimately leads to the activation of the pineal gland, also known as the "third-eye". So, from an esoteric point of view, Baphomet represents this occult process. The "third-eye", the "Ajna Centre" can be opened through meditation.



Although Levi's 1861 depiction of Baphomet is the most famous one, the name of this idol has been circulating for over a thousand years, through secret societies and occult circles.

The first recorded mention of Baphomet as a part of an occult ritual appeared during the era of the Knights Templar. It is widely accepted by occult researchers that the figure of Baphomet was of a great importance in the rituals of the Knights Templar. The first occurrence of the name Baphomet appeared in a 1098 letter by crusader Anselm of Ribemont stating:

"As the next day dawned they called loudly upon Baphomet while we prayed silently in our hearts to God; then we attacked and forced all of them outside the city walls."



Hagur
is a
Grand Hierophant
of the
Elder Brothers
of the Order
Rose + Cross
since
March 15, 1975

Baphomet represents the "Powers of Darkness" combined with the generative fertility of the goat. The pentagram form is shown encompassing the figure of man in the five points of the star, three points up, two points down. In Satanism, representing the carnal instincts of man, the pentagram is inverted to perfectly accommodate the head of the goat – its horns representing duality, thrust upon in defiance; the other three points inverted, or the trinity, Christian dogmas denied.



Aleister Crowley

The British occultist Aleister Crowley was born about six months after the death of Eliphas Levi, causing him to believe that he was Levi's reincarnation. Partly for this reason, Aleister Crowley was known within the O.T.O., the secret society he popularised, as "Baphomet".

Left, a signed picture of Aleister Crowley as Baphomet.



Agios
O
Ba-
pho-
met



Even in hospital February 2010
I transmitted the knighthood.

The practice of magic – either white or black (there is no difference between the two) – depends upon the ability of the adept to control the universal life force, like the psychic vampire does. Magic is used to defend or protect, to destroy and to restore. Destroying obsolete dogmas as we do in Traditional Satanism.



Levi Eliphas

(Reverend Louis Constant)

was also the 52nd Imperator of the Sovereign Order of the Elder Brothers of the Rose + Cross (1865-1874).

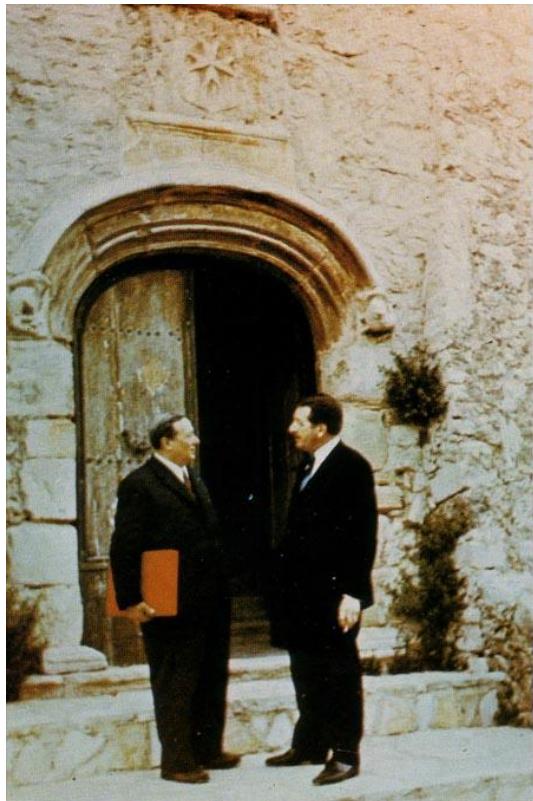
The Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn, founded in London in 1888, adopted much of Levi's magic. Until his death Levi made his living from his occult writings and lessons that he taught. In his popularity he drew a cult following, influencing others to write their own books.



Pierre Phoebus
(Roger Caro),
58th and last
Imperator of the
Sovereign Order
of the Elder Brothers
Rose + Cross

(January 30, 1911 –
January 16, 1992)





The Sovereign Order
possesses three lineages (OSFAR+C)

(1) In October 1316 four templars initiated to the Secret of Secrets (the Royal Secret),
Guy de Montanor, Gaston de la
Pierre Phoebus, Pietro il Buono di Lombardia
and Richard the English,
together with other 24 brothers,
all belonging to the
Templar Church of Jerusalem

(2) The House of Lusignan, the Kings of Cyprus -
Guy de Lusignan (1160 † 1194) lineage up to today.

(3) The Poor Knights of Christ, Custodians
Of the Holy Land

(The last (3) investiture can be transmitted by every knight!)

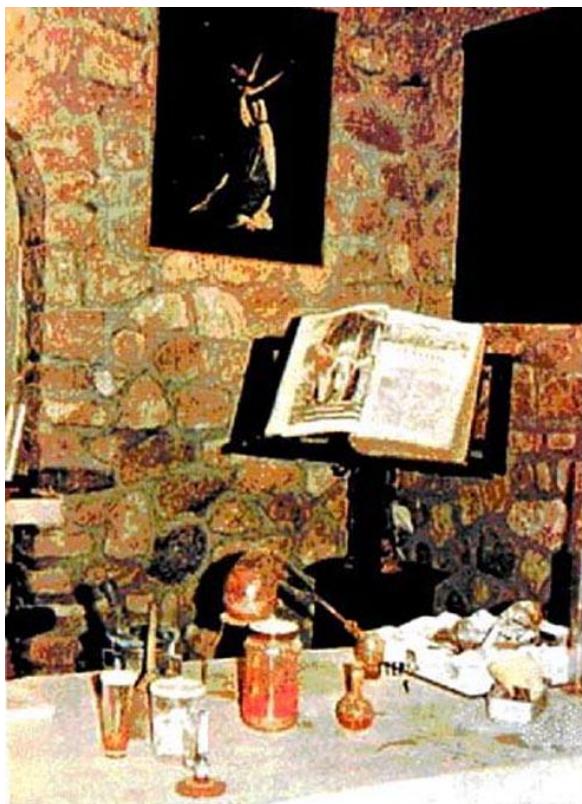


Philippe De Coster

Investiture
to the Knighthood
at Saint-Cyr-Mer,
France by Imperator
Pierre Phoebus (Roger Caro)
during a
Yearly General Council of Knights,
March 15, 1975.

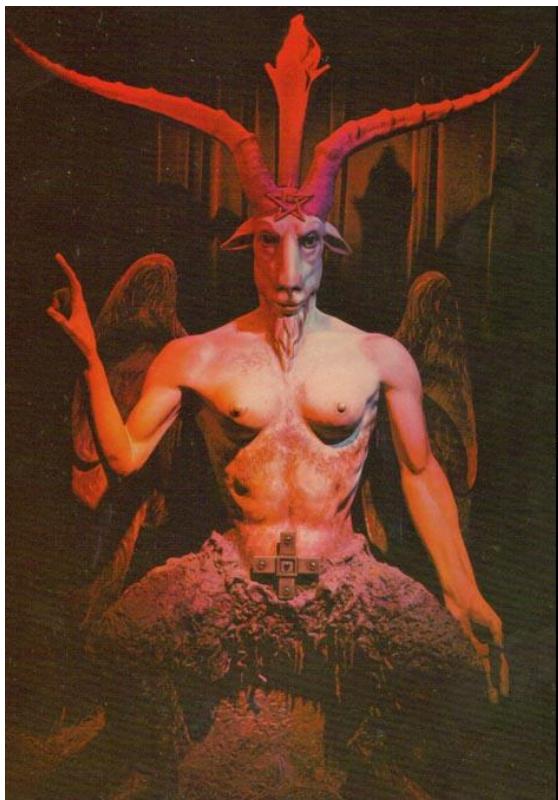
(Photo during a session
in Ghent, Belgium.)

(This is never a religious assembly)

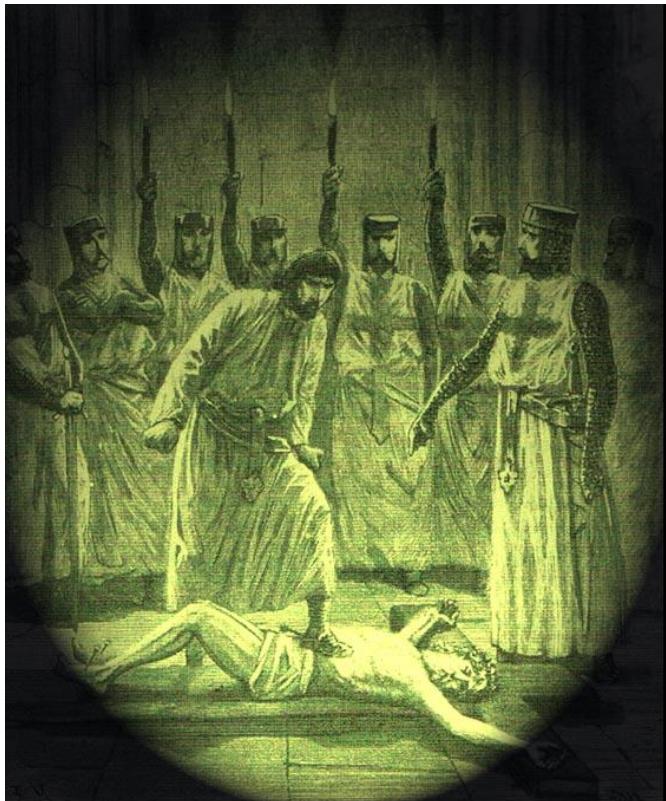


This is the alchemical laboratory of Imperator Pierre Phoebus.
Here he performed the "Alchemical Great Work." (Opera Magna)
He wrote many books on alchemy along his discoveries.

During the Crusades, Pope Innocent III (1208) had admonished the Templars for un-Christian behaviour, and referred explicitly to necromancy. On the other hand, there were individuals who praised them with extravagant enthusiasm.



It would appear that among the Templars "Baphomet" was regarded with reverence, a reverence perhaps tantamount to idolatry. In some instances the name is associated with the gargoyle-like, demonic sculptures found in various preceptories. On other occasions Baphomet seems to be associated with an apparition of a bearded head. Despite the claims of certain older historians, it seems clear that Baphomet was not a corruption of the name Muhammad. On the other hand, it might have been a corruption of the Arabic abu shahmet, pronounced in Moorish Spanish as baphimat. This means "Father of Understanding" or "Father of Wisdom", and 'father' in Arabic is also taken to imply "source". If this is indeed the origin of Baphomet, it would therefore refer presumably to some supernatural or divine principle. But what might have differentiated Baphomet from any other supernatural or divine principle remains unclear. If Baphomet was simply God or Allah, why did the Templars bother to rechristen Him? And if Baphomet was not God or Allah, who or what was he?



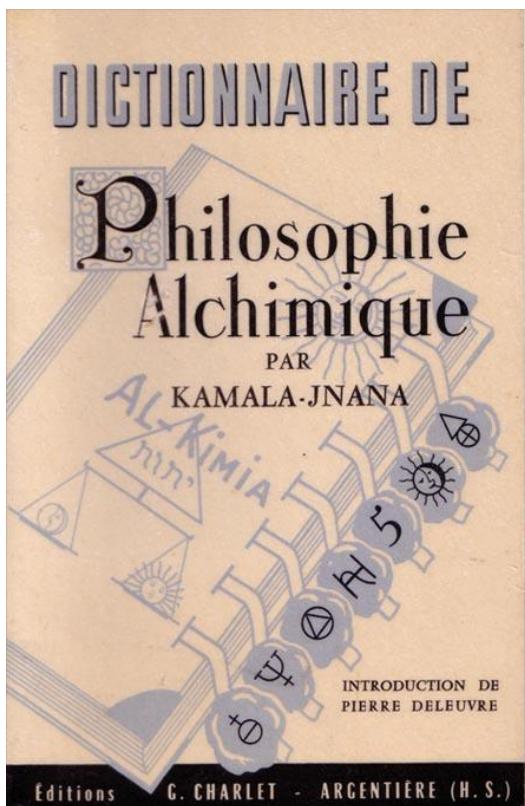
There thus seems little doubt that the Templars' attitude towards Jesus did not concur with that of Roman Catholic orthodoxy, but it is uncertain precisely what the Order's attitude was. In any case, there is evidence that the ritual ascribed to the Templars trampling and spitting on the cross was in the air at least half a century before 1307. Its context is confusing, but it is mentioned in connection with the Sixth Crusade, which occurred in 1249.



During the Middle Ages alchemy existed in a world of mystery, and seemed to be a dark, occult shadow over much of Europe from Medieval times to the birth of the modern world. And its claims were quite often fantastic.

Europe produced many alchemists.





Éditions G. CHARLET - ARGENTIÈRE (H. S.)

What was the motive behind their constant strivings, their never-failing patience in the unravelling of the mysteries, the tenacity of purpose in the face of persecution and ridicule through the countless ages that led the alchemists to pursue undaunted their appointed way? Something far greater, surely, than a mere vainglorious desire to transmute the base metals into gold, or to brew a potion to prolong a little longer this earthly span, for the devotees of alchemy in the main cared little for such things.

(Kamala-Jnana: Roger Caro)

CONCORDANCES ALCHIMIQUES

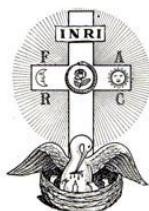
5 Textes Hermétiques par Roger CARO

suivis de

7 Documents inédits sur le Grand-Oeuvre
par KAMALA-JNANA et les Maîtres d'AJUNTA

Préface de Serge HUTIN
(Docteur es-Lettres)

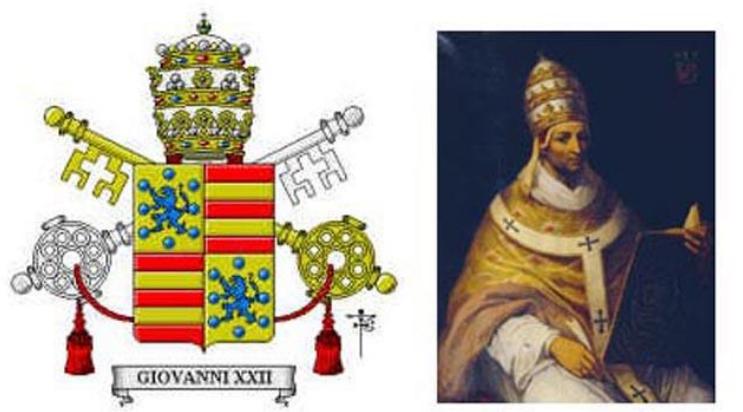
16 Illustrations



The accounts of alchemists almost without exception lead us to believe that they were concerned with metaphysical things rather than with temporal things. They were men inspired by a vision, a vision of man made perfect, of man freed from disease and the limitations of warring faculties both mental and physical, standing godlike in the realization of a power that even at this very moment of time lies hidden in the deeper strata of consciousness, a vision of man made truly in the image and likeness of the One Universal Mind in its Perfection, Beauty, and Harmony.



Secret Knowledge and Mysteries of Antiquity:
 From the earliest times existed different kinds of secret knowledge and cultic mysteries - for instance initiation, cultic-religious mystery plays, and stellar science. All this was available in the ancient civilized societies, e.g. in Egypt. Even today certain forms can be seen in action among primitive people around the world. At ancient times also knowledge and science seem to have been handed down, thus giving their owners a special power. By confident tradition and mythic metaphors, secret knowledge was handed down through Antiquity into newer ages. In official religion-history contexts these cults and the often high-ranking members of their societies are mostly considered as exotic, collateral branches, although they had a decisive, genuine importance in history.



Pope John XXII of Avignon (France),
 though he was persecuting anyone studying science and occultism, he was himself an alchemist, and even wrote an important alchemical work on transmutation.

He founded the Sovereign Order of the Elder Brethren of Rose + Cross, under his Papal supervision, though the knights left him, and flee from Avignon to avoid persecution. After, the Pope founded another similar Order under strict condition. They were very secret orders, history knows very little about them as a well kept secret. Pierre Phœbus (Roger Caro) went from library to library, and French museums, and discovered the secrets of the Order. He wrote two outstanding books. His research work serves the future of our Sovereign Order, even without Imperator.



Roger Caro, Imperator of the Sovereign Order of the Elder Brethren Rose + Cross, was also a renowned alchemist, great writer, a lecturer, an historian and a searcher, in three words "a great worker". Roger remain for most of us a great diviner (dowser), also a clergyman in his latter years, but above all he was a most charitable man, often surrounded by jealous people.

The book cover features a decorative emblem at the top right. It consists of a cross with a rose in the center, flanked by a crescent moon and a sun. Above the cross is a hat-like shape, and below it is a banner with the Latin text "VIVUM SIBI CREATURIS". To the left of the emblem, there is a large, ornate letter 'L' followed by the title 'Legenda des Frères Aimés de la Rose Croix' in a stylized font.

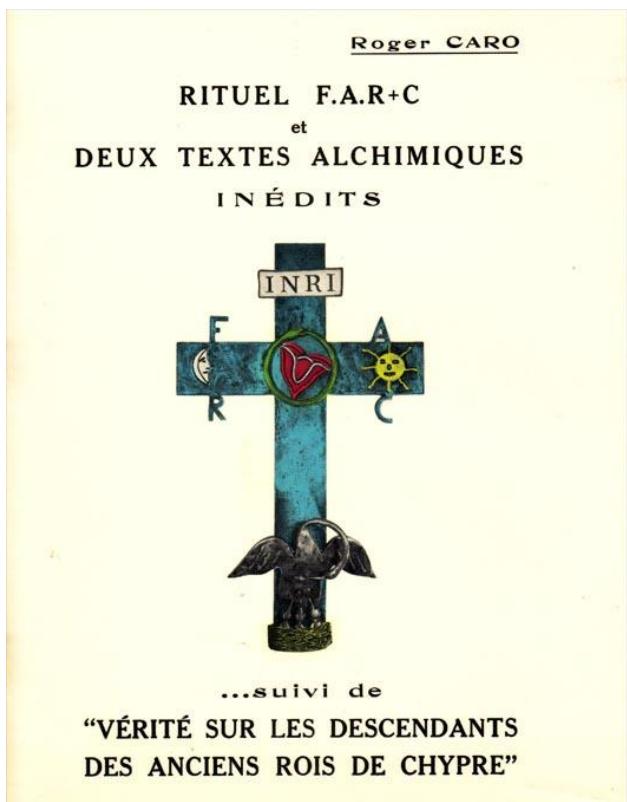
suvie de :

- 7 DEGRÉS INITIATIQUES
- L'ŒUVRE ROYALE DE CHARLES VI

par Roger CARO
(Médaille d'argent des arts sciences, lettres)

préface de : Lilian WETZEL
(Conservateur en chef de la bibliothèque universitaire de Poitiers)

This book a real treasure, and archival manuscript is the result of arduous research work in France and even abroad on the Sovereign Order of the Elder Brethren Rose + Cross. In those days, there was no Internet; Roger had to travel everywhere, visiting museums and national libraries. His entire work is serving us today, Made available for searches in the ages to come world-wide. The Order being a strictly kept secret society, history remains silence about its existence as from the year 1317.



The book (manuscript) contains the research work of Roger Caro about the Kings of Cyprus along the Royalties, and noble descendants to the Family Roux de Lusignan today.

I furthered the research work and found additional information as a small manuscript written by the Family Roux de Lusignan.

The Ebook is called:

“Mes Familles – Nos Mémoires”,
de l’Empire Ottoman à Nos Jours.
(Les Editions Universelles).



The Forty-two Rules
of the
Sovereign Order
of the Elder Brethren
Rose + Cross
handed to
Cardinal-Bishop of
Avignon J. de Via (1316-1317)
murdered the same year
and the
Knights Templar,
Guidon de Montanor was after
J. de Via
the third Imperator



Rules of the Order (1317)

Article 1

First of all, we state that if it happens in the future, the following statutes should be in need of some correction or reform, or if it seems profitable to make new ones, we will propose the matter to the Council and deliberate on these proposals following advice, and what has been deliberated to be reported to the Superior Imperator resident of this city to be approved by him if he sees it worth for publication with the recommended observations, and again that of the Council through elected ones, as to four or two, all Doctors in Alchemy.



Article 2

And, the so-called reformers and composers will swear between the hands of the said Superior to proceed in the stated composition of reformation in utter faithfulness with the aim the sole benefit and use of the public.

Article 3

Item, that these laws can be revoked for future use, in form, or contrary custom.

For this reason we hold that against these laws one can never argue different usage, in form, custom or prescription even if it excess any human memory.



Article 4

And,
at the end such statutes will
be made known to everyone;
the said Imperator will make
them published
in each and every
Court, to be inviolably
observed by all.



Article 5
We, Prince
of the Church, baron,
counts and knights
representing the
thirty-three companions
of our Order,
do profess to serve God
by teaching
and perpetuating
the Holy Wisdom:

Alchemy learned by Saladin and our Masters Ismailia's in the
House of Wisdom at the time when we were still the Knights of Christ.



Article 6

Our new Faith will spread throughout the Order of the Elder Brethren of the Rose + Cross. Its present headquarter is now at the friary of the Brethren Pontiffs of Pont-Saint-Esprit where the rector former chaplain of the Temple prepares our Rules of the Order as decided by our Holy Father Pope John XXIII.



Articles 7 and 8

We want a sovereign and secret order, **not religious**, but religious people may be headed. We make three vows: Charity, Simplicity, Obedience.

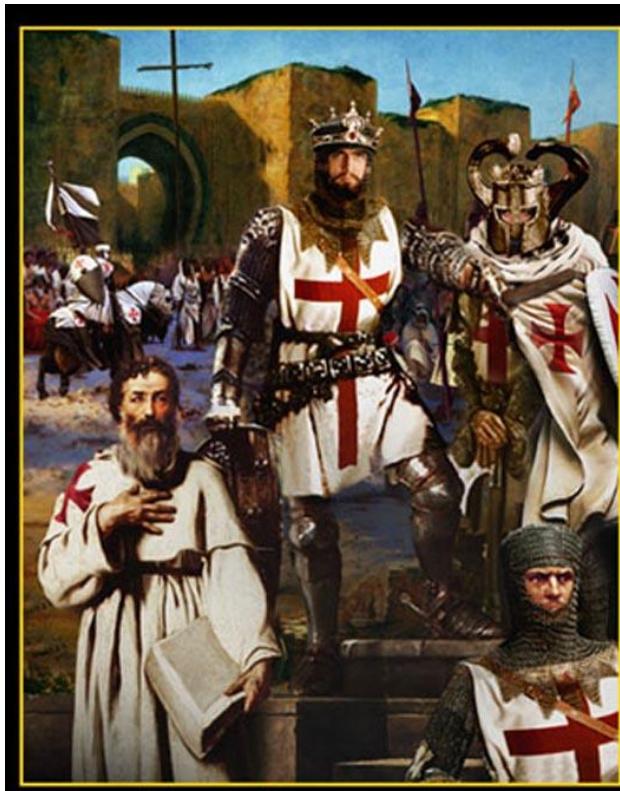


Article 9

Each of the brothers
will be an example
to all humans.

He will never complain
about heaven, nor
of the humans.

He will respect the Princes who are accommodating
him and defend their homeland if necessary. That no
one wakes up at night without raising his soul to his
Creator and the suffering creatures.



Article 10

In remembrance
of the Ismail's Masters
having taught us
their Science,
we perpetuate the
Alchemy not to obtain
gold treasures,
since it demonstrates
the unique Truth
and provides the true
Quintessence of Life.



Article 11

The Arms of our Order will be the Cross of the Saviour invented by Lady Queen Helene; the first Golden Rose blessed by our Holy Father Pope Innocent IV and given to one of the canons of Lyons of the Order of Saint Just, parent of a Templar chaplain, all wearing the red hat of Jacques de Via; finally, the Agnus Dei wearing the Cross of the Temple in recognition of the Commandery of London who saved us.



Article 12

Each Imperator can create a shield: the Pelican that opens the flanks to give life to her young; the lion of King Richard and the Agnus Dei named above will be a mandatory part of these emblems. As to the fabulous animals and other alchemical items, they must come in the Seneschal's Arms, but in the meantime the Imperator will seal the seal of the Agnus Dei with the Templar Cross. This seal will always remain valid.



Articles 13

The Supreme Council of the Order
will be composed as such:

A Imperator

A Seneschal

A Grand Commander

A Commander

A Major Hierophant

A Hierophant

A custodian of the "seals and tresors;"

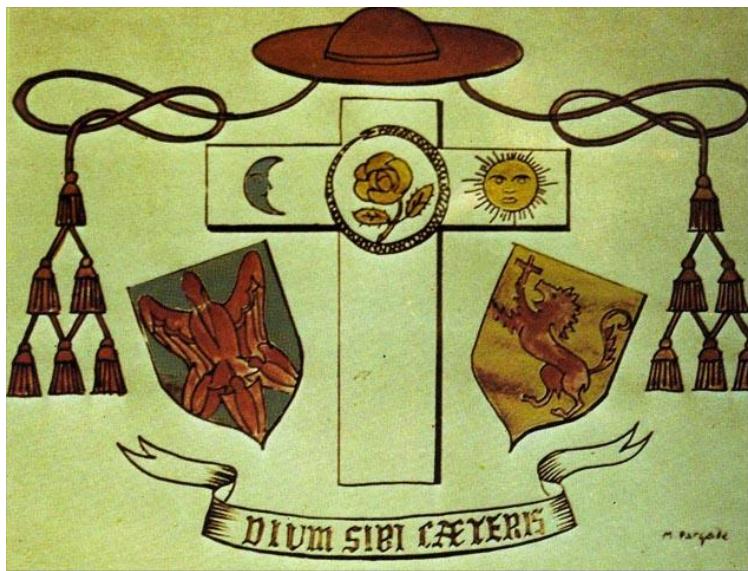
Five Grand Masters

The twenty-one Brother Guides in the
art of Alchemy, are not part of the
Supreme Council.



Article 14

In addition
to the three vows,
each brother will
make a promise
to God. The number
of the Brothers
will never exceed
thirty-three and
there will never be
less.



Article 15

The Imperator is the supreme head of the Order's spiritual and temporal powers, and he will be the only one able to wear in his Arms the cardinal's hat above the cross;

the pelican or the Agnus Dei or the Lion. The slogan will be "Pro cruce virtusque, virusque" or "Dium Sibi Cæteris" or "Fortune and misfortune are one."



Article 16

The Brothers will always work in secrecy so that their works are known only to God. They will use conventional symbols to correspond between them.

Article 17

Alchemical Teaching will be given free to people of all walks of life provided they are honourable and of good moral. There will be seven degrees.



Article 18

The Imperator will be elected by a majority of the Supreme Council during a Conclave and after the death of his predecessor. If some of the dignitaries were too far away or sick, they could vote by messenger. In case of major force the Imperator may designate his successor during his lifetime. The Conclave would then meet to make an act of commitment.



Article 19

The Commandery of the Order will be held appointed by the Imperator.

As our Head may belong to any Christian country, it follows that the

the Court will find itself very often in a difficult position.

However, as a precaution we cannot carry indefinitely archives and treasures, the board will appoint several hiding places to shelter them.



Article 20

All the Brethren of the Council will be appointed by the Imperator: all positions are honorary and free. The twenty-one Brethren Guides will understand Alchemy. They will be appointed by the Grand Masters.

Article 21

The Brethren Guides will teach alchemy free of charge. They will make no claim for subsidies, nor money or other charges, but they will accept donations for the Order.



Article 22

No one may enter the Order with political, religious or commercial objectives.

Article 23

Alliance with another order cannot be decided unless by the Imperator after consulting the Great Council, but only the decision of the Imperator will be retained.



Articles 24 to 25

The Imperator has all authority except on two points:

- 1) Dissolve the Order
- 2) Change the number of Brethren who is thirty-three.

The Order cannot be dissolved unless the majority of thirty-three.



Article 26

Each Grand Master will appoint a committee whose mission is to help and advise him.



Article 27

The Committees will consist of:
A Grand Master
A Hierophant (Prior)
A Secretary
An Adviser

Article 28

The Grand Masters can create several committees.

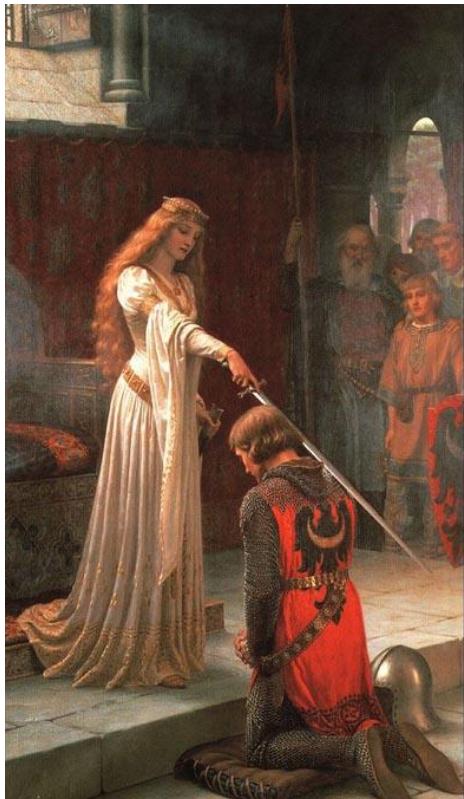


Article 29

Twice a year the leaders of the Committee will send a message to the Imperator to keep him informed of the progress of its teaching.

Article 30

The Adeptship may be given by the Grand Masters or their deputies.



Article 31

The Adeptship will be conferred during a ceremony. A meal in common, made of bread without salt or leaven is to be taken together outside the ceremony.

Article 32

No Brother Guide can appoint his successor, not even the Superiors of the Supreme Council.



Article 33

The Adeptship may be given without ceremony in case of life or death, or if the Adept lives far from his consecrator.

Article 34

Each adept will pronounce the promise of the Sages, but not the three vows, reserved only for the Elder Brethren of the Rose + Cross.



Article 35

Only the Imperator
will appoint
his successor by will
if he thinks
the candidate is fit for
the Order.

Article 36

A Grand Master
may have multiple
charges.



Article 37

The Grand Masters ensure
under their sole responsibility
that no one is neither political
nor commercially engaged,
in anything that binds the Order ...
but each Brother
(outside the Order)
can do what he likes.



Article 38

The Brethren respect all faiths
as God is present everywhere.

Article 39

The Order reserves the dismissal
of a member in case of disobedience
to its statutes.



Article 40
Any dispute will be judged
by
the Imperator.

Article 41
The decisions
of the Imperator
are final.

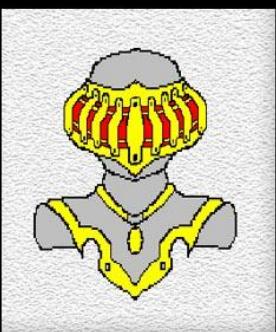
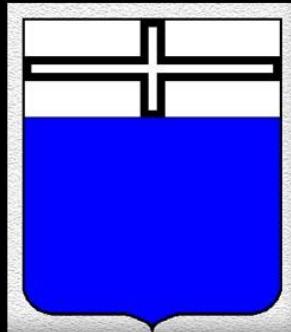


Article 42

All array will fall when the times are come, when there will be wonders in the heavens and among the stars because of learned men and scholars, while there will be riots, as well as betrayed words; there will be many calamities and miseries; and, that there will be more than four pontiffs still to come as to our learned Irish Bishop Malachi.



Done and written on the instruct
of Our Holy Father
Pope Jehan XXII,
the year one thousand three hundred
and seventeen, the eve before the day
of the baptism of our Glorious Lord
Jesus Christ at the Friary of the
Brethren Pontiffs of
Pont-St-Esprit, by our
venerable Rector and approved
by Jacques de Via Imperator
and by Della Revere Seneschal,
who put their seals.



At the very heart of any Chivalrous Brotherhood whether it be the “Sovereign Order of the Elder Brethren Rose + Cross”; or “The Poor Knights of Christ, Guardians of the Holy Land”, being all Knight Templars from the Temple of Jerusalem, all had a shield, or they had a family coat of arms at the time of their investiture, or being made one with the help of a Heraldic designer and of the Judge of Arms of the Order. Whatever the origin of the shield, in a general way, the Order imposes an emblem to every new knight.



The Chivalry,
as many things
in the Medieval
Times, has left
its mark,
regulated by
customary laws.

These customary laws have survived by bits and pieces.
Nevertheless certain points are clarified either by historical
facts, or by authors whose testimony cannot be doubted.
So, we will review some of these customs.



Every man should receive
the investiture
to be knighted.
The armament of King
Francis I
by the Knight Pierre
Terrail, Lord of Bayard,
known as the
Knight without fear
and without reproach

was held September 15, 1515, though he was crowned on January 25 of the same year, proves that even a king cannot call himself "Knight" if he has not bowed the knee before another Knight to receive the Knighthood.



The Rank of the Knight

Customs confirm that the Knights take precedence over non-knight, be they even Blood Prince, where it concludes that the Knights had the rank of prince of blood.

In our time, the only mark that we keep of this customary "rank" lays in the fact that our arms are surmounted by the helmet of the princes of blood.

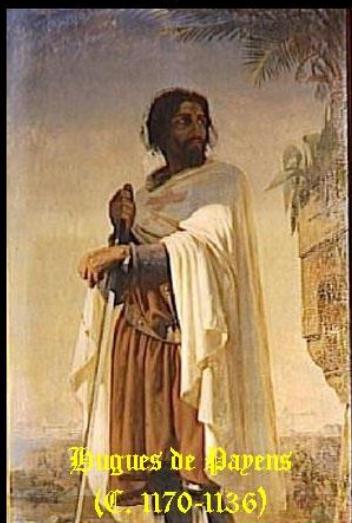
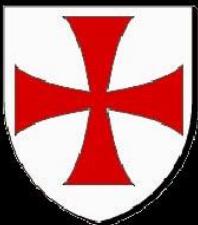


Chivalry is eternal

Once one has been invested in the Chivalry, he remains Knight until his death. There is only one Court of Honour that can, in case of felony, remove a person from Chivalry. However, it is still necessary that the court is independent and free from any pressure or coercion.

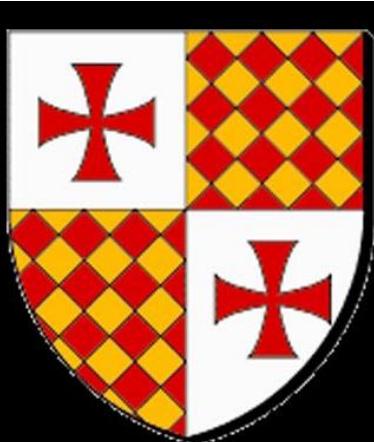
probable coats of arms				
Hugues de Paynes 1118-1136	Robert de Craon 1136-1149	Everard des Barres 1149-1152	Bernard de Tremelay 1152-1153	Andre de Montbard 1153-1156
Bertrand de Blanquefort 1156-1169	Philip de Milly of Nablus 1169-1171	Odo de St Amand 1171-1180	Arnold de Torroja 1180-1185	Gerard de Ridefort 1185-1189
Robert de Sable 1191-1193	Gilbert Enail 1194-1200	Philip de Plessiez 1201-1209	William de Chartres 1210-1219	Peter de Montaigu 1219-1232
Armand de Perigord 1232-1244	Richard de Bures 1244-1247	William de Sonnac 1247-1250	Reynald de Vichtiers 1250-1256	Thomas Berard 1256-1273
William de Beaujeu 1273-1291	Theobald Gaudin 1291-1293		Jacques de Molay 1293-1314	

Here commences the list of Knights who have succeeded in the direction of the Order as Grand Masters elected by the Knights, leaders of the Order; or maybe either as Lieutenant Magister of the Order in absence of the Grand Master or, finally, as Regent "ad interim" assuming the regency at the request of the Grand Master during an impediment of the last.



Hugues de Payns is, in all likelihood, born at the Castle of Payns (France). Along the timeline of the Masters of the Temple is suggested that he was born around the year 1070 and related to the family of the Counts of Champagne but nothing is known of his parentage or his childhood.

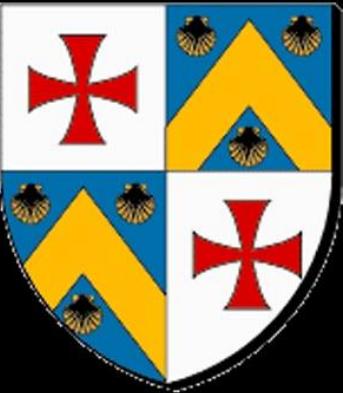
It may be that Hugues de Payns is a descendant of the Carolingian Hildemar, possessor of land in Payns. Presumably, and only by comparison with other young nobility of his time, he was major at the age of fourteen, then squire of a knight in his neighbourhood, maybe of the Count of Champagne himself, and finally became himself a knight. He received his fief either from the Payns, or inherited from his father along the usage which began in the tenth century, or directly from the Count of Champagne.



Robert de Craon (c. 1100-c.1147)

Robert de Craon became the second Grand Master of the Knights Templar in 1136. Although known as 'the Burgundian', he was born in Anjou, and was a younger son of Renaud de Craon. He had given up a fiancée in Aquitaine to join the newly formed Order in Jerusalem, serving under Hugues de Payens. He was also present at the Council of Troyes.

He oversaw the continuing growth of the Order and saw it gain extensive privileges when as a result of the Papal Bull Omne Datum Optimum. Robert participated in some inconclusive campaigns against the forces of Aleppo in the Holy Land. He was succeeded by Everard des Barres, who arrived from France with the forces of the Second Crusade.



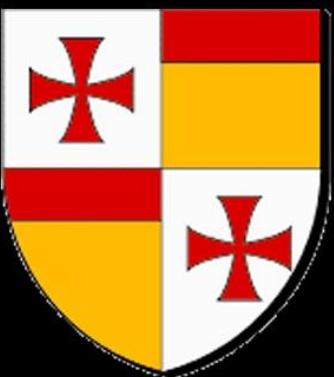
Everard des Barres

(Died 1174)

Everard des Barres was the third Grand Master of the Knights Templar. From an aristocratic family of Meaux, Champagne, he entered the Order in his teens, and by 1143 had risen to the rank of Grand Preceptor of France. He was chosen to lead the Order on the death of Robert de Clon. He was close to King Louis VIII of France and accompanied him on the Second Crusade, soon after his elevation in 1147.

The embarkation followed a chapter meeting held in Paris, attended by King Louis, by Pope Eugenius III and by 120 Knights of the Temple, including some summoned by Everard from Spain. It was probably at this meeting that the Order received the right to wear the red cross of martyrdom on their white habits. Everard returned to France with the King after the ignominious end of the Crusade, apparently stricken with guilt over the failure of the venture. He resigned from the Templars in around 1151, and joined the Cistercian Order at Clairvaux in order to do penance.

He was replaced as Grand Master by Bernard de Tremelap.



Bernard de Tremelap (Died 1153)

Bernard de Tremelap was the fourth Grand Master of the Knights Templar. He was elected following the abdication of Everard des Barres, and led the Order in the aftermath of the unsuccessful Second Crusade. Bernard was probably a Burgundian, from a family originating near Dijon. Bernard and the Templars supported King Baldwin III of Jerusalem in his 1153 campaign against Ascalon, the only coastal town still in Muslim hands. A preliminary to this had been the strengthening of the castle at Gaza, which the Templars had taken over. This had severed Ascalon's land connection to Egypt.

The Christians laid siege to Ascalon itself on 23 January 1153. Bernard de Tremelap had a wooden siege tower built and moved it close to the walls. The Egyptian defenders of the city succeeded in setting this on fire, but the wind changed direction, carrying the flames towards Ascalon. The walls themselves came crashing down.



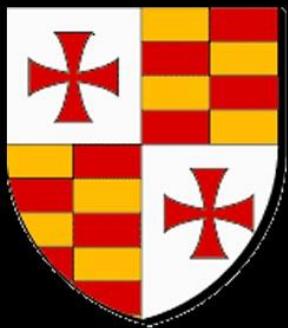
Bernard de Tremelay
Ascalon Battle

According to the chronicler William of Tyre (who was seldom one to ascribe the best motives to the Knights Templar) the Templars rushed into the breach without the King's knowledge, while Bernard de Tremelay prevented the other Crusaders from following, hoping to keep the greater part of the plunder. If so it was foolish over-confidence, for the next day the Egyptians hung the beheaded bodies of the Grand Master and forty of his men over the ramparts. The Christians fought on and the city fell to Baldwin soon after. Meanwhile André de Montbard succeeded as Grand Master of the Temple.



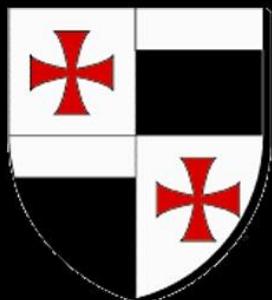
André de Montbard (1103-1156)

André de Montbard was a Burgundian of noble birth. He was one of the early members of the Knights Templar. He went on to become fifth Grand Master of the Order, presiding between 1153 and 1156. André was a younger son of Bernard, Lord of Montbard and Humberge de Ricey. André's brother Rainard succeeded to the title. André was also an uncle of Bernard of Clairvaux. Bernard apparently being the son of André's much older half sister Aleth. André's access to St Bernard and Bernard's influence within the Catholic Church helped ensure the official recognition of the Templars at the Council of Troyes. André apparently arrived in Europe some time before the other founding Templars, charged with gaining support for the Holy Land and negotiating with Fulk V, Count of Anjou, to come East to marry Melisende, the heiress to the kingdom of Jerusalem. André de Montbard was elected Grand Master after the Tremelay perished in Ascalon.



Bertrand de Blanquefort (1109-1169)

Bertrand de Blanquefort (or Blanchefort/Blancfort) was elected as the sixth Grand Master of the Knights Templar in 1156. He presided during the reign of Baldwin III, and seems to have been one of the first Grand Masters to use the symbol of the two riders on his official seal. Blanquefort is known for extending and revising the Templars' Rule, adding a number dealing with specifically military situations and the hierarchy of the Order, which had by this time become more complex. (The original Rule had been primarily concerned with monastic living.) In 1159 Bertrand de Blanquefort was captured by the Sultan Nur ed-Din of Damascus, after being ambushed by the Saracens in the Jordan Valley.



Philip de Milly of Nablus (Died 1178)

Philip of Nablus was the Lord Nablus, and then of Oultrejordan, holding the castle of Kerak. He would become a Templar Grand Master. Philip was son of Guy de Milly, a Crusader from Picardy. He was well connected, being a step-brother of the lord of Ramla, and brother in law of Barisan of Ibelin, who was married to his sister Helvis. Philip became an influential baron in the Kingdom of Jerusalem. He was loyal to Queen Melisende, and formed part of her response to the fall of Edessa in 1144, at a time when Baldwin III was being sidelined for political reasons. Later, Philip fought alongside Baldwin and the Knights Templar at the capture of Ascalon. He is said to have been a gifted linguist, knowing French, Latin, Arabic and Armenian. At some point he also made a pilgrimage to the Monastery of Saint Catherine of Alexandria in the Sinai. He joined the Templars himself some time before 1166, probably after the death of his wife Isabella. In 1169 he was elected the Order's seventh Grand Master, succeeding Bertrand de Philip was the first Grand Master to have been born in the orient. The probably led the Order during the defence of Gaza against an attack by Saladin. Philip resigned as Grand Master in 1171 for reasons unknown.



Endes or Odo de St Armand (Died 1180)

Odo de St Amand hailed from an aristocratic family of Limousin. He came east and served as Marshal of Jerusalem, before joining the Knights Templar. Odo went on to become the eighth Grand Master of the Templars in 1171, during the reign of Amalric I of Jerusalem. He succeeded Bertrand de Blanquefort, with whom he apparently had been captured and held prisoner after the battle of Banyas, against Nur ed-Din. Relations between the Order and the King continued to be difficult, and the troubles came to a head in 1172, when the Templar Walter de Mesiñ ambushed an envoy of the Assassin sect, returning to Syria from negotiations with Amalric.

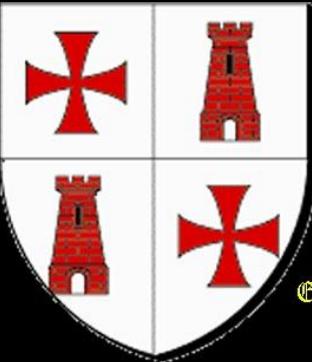
William of Tyre, recording his capture, expressed little sympathy, and condemned Odo as an evil man, full of pride and arrogance 'in whose nostrils dwelt the spirit of fury'. He also claimed that many held Odo responsible for the military disaster. Odo refused to be ransomed, in accordance with the Rule, and died in chains in prison the following year. He was succeeded in his absence by Arnold de Tarroja.



The Assassins:

A Radical Sect in Islam

The word 'Assassin' was brought back from Syria by the Crusaders, and in time acquired the meaning of murderer. Originally it was applied to the members of a Muslim religious sect - a branch of the Ismailis, and the followers of a leader known as the Old Man of the Mountain. Their beliefs and their methods made them a by-word for both fanaticism and terrorism in Syria and Persia in the 11th and 12th centuries, and the subject of a luxuriant growth of myth and legend. Today the situation is not different in Syria: "Great killing".



Arnold de Tarroja

(Died 1184)

Arnold de Tarroja was elected the ninth Grand Master of the Knights Templar in about 1180. Taking advantage of a two-year truce agreed between Baldwin IV and Saladin, Arnold set out to tour the courts of Europe to appeal for support for the Holy Land.

He had been dispatched by a council in Jerusalem along with the Heraclius, the Patriarch of Jerusalem, and Roger Grand Master of the Hospitallers.

They hoped especially to secure the support of Henry II of England (who had sworn to take the Cross as part of his penance for his part in the death of Thomas à Becket.)

However Arnold of Tarroja fell sick, and died before he could get any further than Verona. His companions had to carry on without him.



John of Terric (Jean de Terric)

1184 – 1188

John de Terric or Thierry or Thérènce is a mystery to the historians of the Templar Order. Has he been elected Grand Master, or has he not been,

like in his letters to the Pope and to the King of England, calling himself as "Grand Preceptor of the house of the Temple in Jerusalem"? Probably, he has been temporarily elected waiting for the official resignation or death of the Grand Master of Arnaud de Toroge. He is placed between Arnaud de Toroge and Gerard de Ridefort.





Gerard de Ridefort

(Died 1189)

Gerard de Ridefort (or van Ruddervoorde) was the tenth Grand Master of the Knights Templar.

He presided at the time of the disasters that befell the Kingdom of Jerusalem in and around 1187. He was an ally of Guy de Lusignan, Queen Sibylla and Reynald de Chatillon. Gerard has been portrayed as a sinister firebrand and a warmonger of the same cast as Reynald, pursuing policies and tactics inconsistent with the best interests of the Kingdom. He did not seem to lack personal courage, however, and perhaps if he had been blessed with more luck he would be better thought of. Still, given his clearly immoderate nature, it is difficult to account to his rise to the top of the Order of the Temple, especially considering that he was not a career Templar. Gerard was probably of Flemish extraction.



Robert de Sablé

(Died 1193)

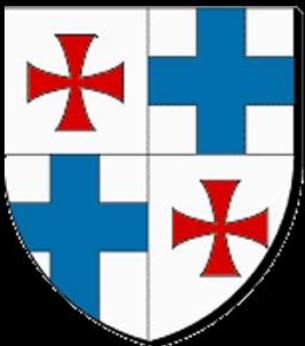
Robert de Sablé was a widowed Knight from Maine, France, and an Angevin vassal.

He was lord of Brillary and La Suze. He fought under Richard the Lionheart during the Third Crusade.

He was formerly commanded a division of Richard's a close associate of the King. Richard's support helped gain Robert the position of Grand Master of the Temple (the eleventh) in 1191, though he had only recently entered the Order.

He succeeded Gerard de Ridefort, and led the Order at the capture of Acre. He also presided over the Order's short-lived acquisition of Cyprus, dispatching twenty knights and their retainers to govern the island. He was eventually succeeded by Gilbert Horal.





Gilbert Crail

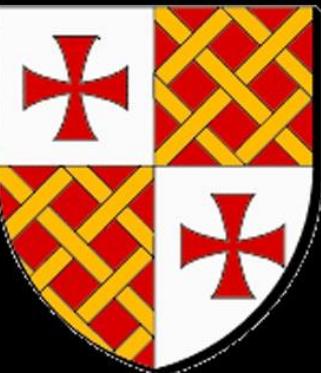
(1152-1200)

Gilbert Crail (or Crill or Horal) was a Templar from Aragon. He had joined in his teens and risen to be Master of the Temple in the Aragon and Provence, and had seen action in the Reconquista as well as in the Holy Land. He became the twelfth Grand Master, succeeding Robert de Sable in around 1194. Unlike Gerard de Ridefort, Gilbert Crail favoured peaceful relations with the Muslims. This caused tension between the Templar and the Hospitallers who at this time were the more militant party. Gilbert's conciliatory policy towards the Muslims also set him at odds with Pope Innocent III and the more militant of the Catholic clergy who wanted eternal war against the infidel.

The Bishop of Sidon excommunicated Gilbert. However the Pope overturned this excommunication, on the basis that only Popes had the authority to excommunicate a Templar, and because it created a scandal.

Gilbert died in December 1200 and was eventually succeeded by

Philip de Plessie.

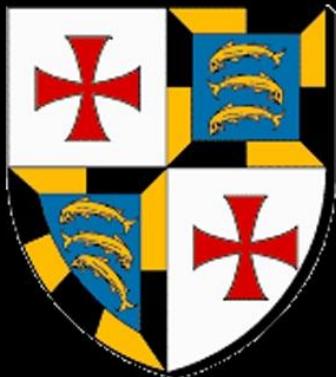


Philip de Plessie

(1165-1209)

Philip de Plessie was a knight from the region of Anjou.

He may have been born in the castle of Plessis-Macé near Angers. He participated in the Third Crusade as a secular knight, and at some point thereafter joined the Knights Templar. He became the thirteenth Grand Master in early 1201. He kept the Templars out of the Fourth Crusade, perhaps anticipating that it would be hijacked by the Venetians and diverted against Byzantium. Philip was in favour of continuing the diplomatic policy of Gilbert Crail, and extending the peace treaty with the Muslims, which had ended the Third Crusade, much to the anger of Pope Innocent III and his legates. Philip did, however, launch an expedition to recover the castle of Baghras from the Armenians.



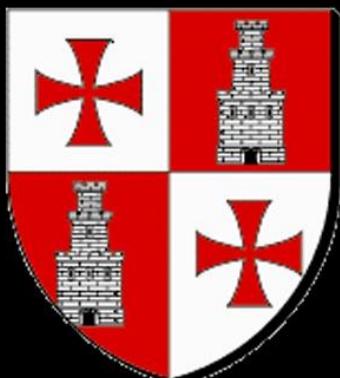
Guillaume de Chartres

(Died 1219)

Guillaume de Chartres became the fourteenth Grand Master of the Knights Templar in 1209. He was probably born into the nobility of the Champagne region, and became a Templar in Sours, near Chartres, in around 1200.

As Grand Master he was best known for building the impregnable fortress known as Pilgrims' Castle. He died of fever in 1219 during the Crusaders' siege of Damietta in Egypt, the first major engagement of the Fifth Crusade.

He was succeeded by Peter de Montaigu.



Peter de Montaigu

(Died 1232)

Peter (Pierre, or Pedro) de Montaigu became the fifteenth Grand Master of the Knights Templar in 1219. He succeeded Guillaume de Chartres as who died of fever during the siege of Damietta during the Fifth Crusade. Peter had been the Master of the Temple in Provence and Aragon, and had fought at the Battle of Las Navas de Tolosa. Peter de Montaigu was the brother of Garin de Montaigu, who was Grand Master of the Hospitallers from 1208-1228.

This was the only time when two members of the same family presided over the two leading Military Orders. It secured some years of harmonious relations between them. During the Sixth Crusade, Peter became a bitter enemy of the Emperor Frederick II who ratified the return of Jerusalem in a treaty with al Kamil in a treaty without the Grand Masters' seal. Peter and the Templars were suspected of plotted against Frederick, who retaliated by besieging them in Acre.

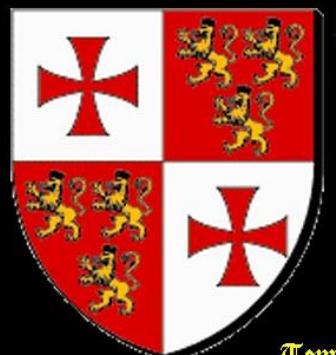


Armand de Périgord (1178-1244 or 1247)

Armand de Périgord (or Hermann de Pierre-Grosse) (1178–1247?) was a descendant of the Counts of Périgord and a Grand Master of the Knights Templar. He was master of the Province of Apulia and Sicily from 1205 to 1232. In 1232, he was elected Grand Master of the Templars. He organized attacks on Cana, Safita, Sephoria and Praetoria, and against the Muslim positions around the Sea of Galilee. All of these expeditions were failures and diminished the Templars' effectiveness.

In 1236, on the border between Syria and Cilicia, 120 knights, along with some archers and Turcopoles, were ambushed near the town of Darbsâk (Terbezé). In the first phase of the battle, the Templars reached the town

but they met fierce resistance. When reinforcements from Aleppo arrived, the Templars were massacred. Fewer than twenty of them returned to their castle in Bagras, fifteen km from the battle.



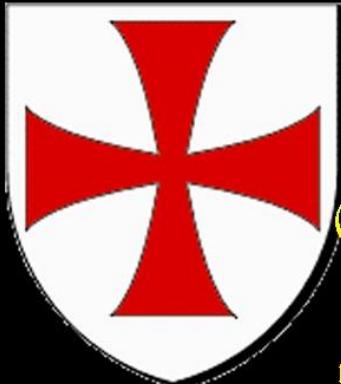
Armand de Périgord (1178-1244 or 1247)

(Continued)

In September 1239, Armand arrived at Acre. He made a treaty with Sultan of Damascus, in parallel with the Hospitaller treaty with the Sultan of Egypt.

In 1244 the Sultan of Damascus demanded that the Templars help repel the Khwarezmians from Asia Minor. In October 1244, the Templars, Hospitallers and Teutonic Knights, together with the Sultan of Damascus, confronted the Sultan of Egypt and his Khwarezmian allies at the Battle of La Forbie. The Christian-Muslim coalition was defeated, with more than 30,000 deaths. Some Templars and Hospitallers reached Ascalon, still in Christian hands. Armand de Périgord may have been killed during the battle, or may have been captured and survived until 1247.





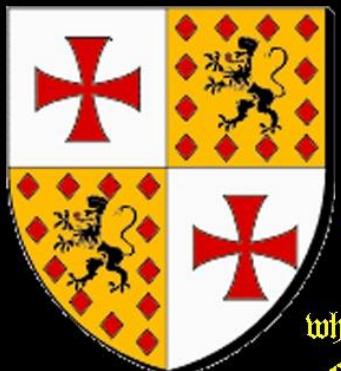
Richard de Bures (Died 1247)

Richard de Bures (or des Barres) was probably the seventeenth Grand Master of the Knights Templar, elected in 1244,



and succeeding Armand de Périgord, who was either killed or captured at the Battle of La Forbie. Little is known about this period in the Order's history and Richard is omitted from some lists of Grand Masters.

He was succeeded by Guillaume de Sonnac.



Guillaume de Sonnac (Died 1250)

Guillaume de Sonnac was born to a noble family in the French region of Rouergue. No date of birth survives for the Grand Master. He was described by Matthew Paris as "a discreet and circumspect man, who was also skilled and experienced in the affairs of war".

Guillaume de Sonnac was an established member of the

order before his election as Grand Master.

He was the Preceptor of Aquitaine in France for the Templars and arrived in the Holy Land around autumn of 1247, finding the remnants of the Kingdom of Jerusalem in a precarious state. Grand Master Armand de Périgord had been taken prisoner at the Battle of La Forbie in 1244, and after negotiations for his release failed two years later, Guillaume de Sonnac was proposed as a replacement. Before his first year in the East was out, he was the order's new leader.



Reynald de Vichiers

(Died 1256)

Reynald de Vichiers became the nineteenth Grand Master in 1250 after the death of Guillaume de Sonnac at Mansourah in Egypt, during the Seventh Crusade. Previously he had been Marshal of the Temple, and had contributed to the preparation of the Crusade, arranging shipping for Louis IX's armies. Reynald soon proved his worth as a redoubtable warrior, with an independent streak.

Jean de Joinville's chronicle recalls how on the march south from Damietta, King Louis IX had ordered that none was to break formation in the face of enemy harassment. Then one of the Muslims gave a Knight Templar in the first rank so heavy a blow with his battle-axe that it felled him under the hooves of Reynald de Vichiers's horse. The marshal cried out: 'At them in the name of God for I cannot longer stand this!' He spurred his horse at the enemy, followed by his brethren, and, as the Templars' horses were fresh and the Turks' already weary, not a single enemy escaped. Reynald de Vichiers accompanied Louis IX to the Acre, following the defeat in Egypt. There, with Louis's backing, he was confirmed as the Grand Master. He acted as godfather to a son born to Louis and Marguerite of Provence, (born within Pilgrims Castle).



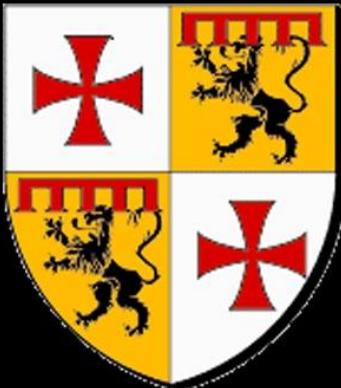
Thomas Berard

(d. 1273)

Thomas Berard became the twentieth Grand Master of the Templars in 1256. It was he who sent word to Europe of the threat from the advancing Mongols, who had blazed their way across the Middle East. He reported their atrocities and predicted that unless help was given a horrible annihilation was inevitable.

Berard presided at the time when the Mameluks under Baybars were putting great pressure on the Crusader States, especially the Principality of Antioch. While based in Acre,

Berard heard of the fall of Antioch, and that Baghras was under siege. Unable to send relief, and knowing that the castle could not withstand the siege, Berard sent a message ordering the beleaguered brethren there to surrender and withdraw to la Roch Guillaume. It was found that the garrison had already surrendered. Berard did not have them permanently expelled, but held them to account, especially for failing to destroy everything before departing.



Guillaume de Beaujeu
(c.1230-1291)

Guillaume de Beaujeu, aka William of Beaujeu, was the 21st Grand Master of the Knights Templar, from 1273 until his death during the siege of Acre in 1291. He was the last Grand Master to preside in Palestine. During his tenure the new Mamluk Sultan, Qalawun, easily conquered in 1289 the County of Tripoli, which had ignored Beaujeu's warnings. In 1290 Qalawun marched on Acre, the capital of the remnant of the Kingdom of Jerusalem, but died in November before launching the attack.

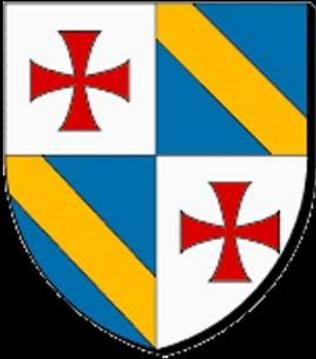
His son Al-Ashraf Khalil, however, decided to continue the campaign. Beaujeu led the defence of the city. At one point during the siege, he dropped his sword and walked away from the walls. His knights remonstrated. Beaujeu replied: "Je ne m'ensuis pas; je suis mort. Voici le coup." ("I'm not running away; I am dead. Here is the blow.") He raised his arm to show the mortal wound he had received. Beaujeu died of his wound and the city fell to the Mamluks, signalling the end of Crusader occupation of the Holy Land.



Theobald Gaudin (Died c.1293)

Theobald Gaudin was a Knights Templar who had served in the Order for 30 years. He had held the ranks of Turkopolier and Preceptor of Acre (Grand Preceptor). Acre had fallen under the massive onslaught of al-Ashraf Khalil and his Mameluk forces in May 1291. While still serving under Guillaume de Beaujeu, Theobald had attempted in vain to prevent a violent clash between Pisan and Genoese parties in Acre.

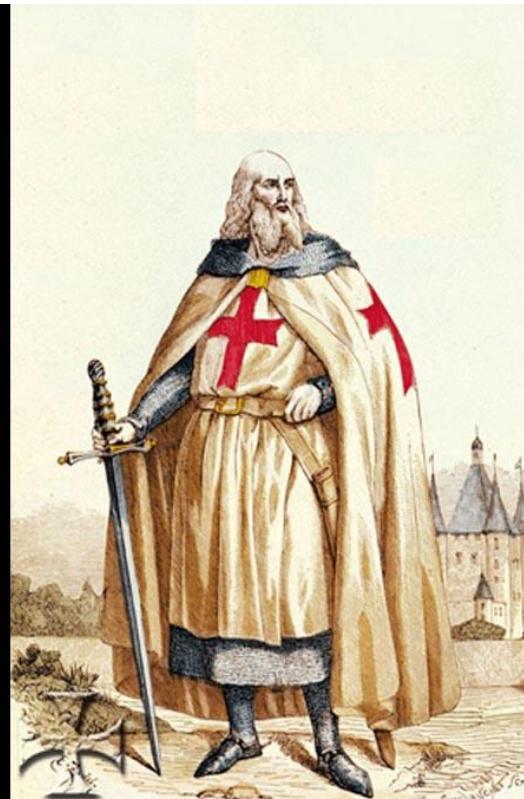
However he and the Grand Master had succeeded in preventing some captive Pisan sailors being sold into slavery. Gaudin was elected the twenty-second (and penultimate) Grand Master of the battered remnants of the Order of the Temple, after the deaths of de Beaujeu and Peter de Sevrey in the battle. Theobald escaped from Acre by sea, three days before the final fall of the Templars' fortress, sailing to Sidon with the Order's treasure. In the month after the fall of Acre, Tyre had surrendered and Sidon seemed hardly defensible. Gaudin withdrew to Cyprus, intending to return to Sidon with reinforcements. However the Templars seem to have been demoralised, and soon Sidon, Beirut and the fortresses of Tortosa and even Pilgrim's Castle were also abandoned. Only the garrison on Arwad remained, off shore from Tortosa. The mainland was entirely lost. Gaudin was succeeded on Cyprus by Jacques de Molay.



Non nobis Domine,
non nobis,
sed Nomini Tuo
da Gloriam

Jacques de Molay (c.1245-1314)

Jacques de Molay (or Molai) was the twenty-third and last Grand Master of the Knights of the Temple of Jerusalem



Birthplace of Jacques de Molay

In the department of the "Haute Saone",
the village of Gourgeon (France),
located on Highway 19,
after Combeaufontaine, turn left towards
the village of Molay.

It is there the birthplace of the last Grand Master of the Knights Templar, Jacques de Molay. He was the son of a simple gentleman, vassal of the Sire de la Rochelle (the neighbouring village). Jacques de Molay was elected Grand Master of the Temple in 1293 and died at the stake March 13, 1314 on the orders of Philip le Bel (Fair) and Pope Clement V.



Ordination (investiture) of Jacques de Molay

Jacques de Molay was a relation of the Lords of Longwy in Franche-Comte. He was initiated into the Order in around 1266, in the Preceptory of Beune near Autun, according to his Chinon confession, and was received by Humbert de Pairaud (the father of Hugues de Pairaud).

In 1291 he possibly fought at the siege of Acre, and two years later on Cyprus was elected Grand Master.

Jacques de Molay was one of the foremost advocates of action to recover the Holy Land. He visited Rome, Paris and London, in 1294, raising support and gathering a new Templar force.

Back in the Levant he sought alliances with the Mongols and Armenians, and strengthened the garrison on the island of Arwad.



Jacques de Molay even purchased six war galleys from Venice with a view to invading Tortosa, and re-establishing a Christian foothold in Syria.

The operation ended in costly failure, though, when Arwad itself was lost a Mameluk invasion fleet of sixteen galleys.



In 1306 Jacques de Molay was summoned from Cyprus by Pope Clement V.

He and Fulk de Villaret, his opposite number in the Hospitallers, were invited to discuss plans for a new Crusade, and also a proposal to amalgamate the Orders of the Temple and the Hospital.

Jacques de Molay prepared a paper on the subject, conceding that there would be some advantages to the proposed merger, but that on the whole it was a bad idea because the rivalry between the two orders was healthy and spurred them on to greater efforts in the Christian cause. Fulk kept quiet on the matter, but apparently felt the same. Meanwhile on the matter of a new Crusade both Grand Masters expressed the view that only a large scale Passagium generale would succeed in re-establishing the Christian kingdom in the Holy Land.

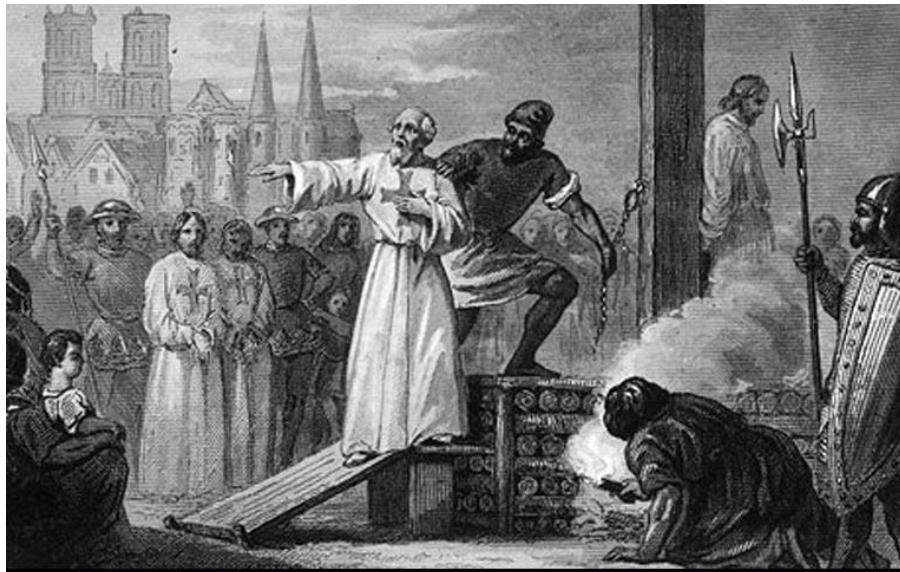


Jacques de Molay

went next to the Paris Temple.

On 13 October 1307 he and his brethren were arrested there. This was with orders secretly issued a month before hand by King Philip the Fair, accusing the Templars of blasphemous crimes and heresy. Jacques de Molay had attended the funeral of the King's sister in law as a pallbearer only the day before the arrests however, and seems to have been taken by surprise when the raid came. De Molay was interrogated by Royal agents and the Inquisition, probably being held in the Templars' own dungeons at the Paris Temple. He was probably subjected to torture.

On 24 October he confessed to some of the accusations- namely spitting on the Cross and denial of Christ.



He would not, however, confess to homosexual practices. He was obliged to repeat his confession publicly the following day to the masters of the University of Paris, and also to urge his brethren likewise to confess.

The Grand Master's early capitulation, forced as it may have been, did much to undermine the defence of the Order and was a propaganda coup for the Capetian authorities. It prejudiced the wider world against the Templars and lent credence to the astonishing accusations. It also made it impossible for the Pope to continue in a critical stance regarding the King's actions.



With the other leading Templars that had been captured, (Raymbaud de Caron, Hugues de Pairaud, Geoffroi de Charney and Geoffroi de Gonneville), Jacques De Molay was moved to the castle of Chinon. There these Templars again gave a partial confession to three Cardinals sent by the Pope, who afterwards bestowed absolution on them. All the Templar dignitaries except de Caron were subsequently brought back to Paris to testify at the tribunal called the Papal Commission.



and through 1312 when the Council of Vienne abolished the Order of the Temple and consigned it to oblivion.

Jacques de Molay retracted his confession at the end of the year.

Over the following years, he wavered, evidently worn down by his captivity.

He offered little leadership to the Templars wishing to defend the Order, but at times seemed willing to assert the Order's honourable nature. He apparently remained imprisoned throughout 1310 when the Archbishop of Sens,

Philip de Marigny incapacitated the Templars' defence at the Papal commission by taking and burning

54 Templars;



on 18 March 1314, and to hear their sentence of perpetual imprisonment. Hugues de Pairaud and Geoffroi de Gonneville persisted in their confessions and accepted their fate.

He and the three other dignitaries of the late Order were eventually brought out before an assembly of prelates (including Cardinal Arnold Novelli and Archbishop de Marigny), lawyers, university theologians and the public



Jacques De Molay, though, stunned his persecutors by making a lucid and passionate last minute defence of the Order. He was supported by Geoffroi de Charney. The rebellious Templars were passed to the prévôt of Paris and flung back into jail. When the King learned what had happened, he went into a rage, and ordered the two Templars to be condemned as relapsed heretics. Before night fell they were taken to the Ille des Fauvaires in the Seine, and burned to death. It was recorded that their courage and constancy impressed and surprised the onlookers. The next day, recorded the Chronicler Giovanni Villani, came friars and other religious persons, who gathered up the ashes of the Templar martyrs and carried them away to holy places.



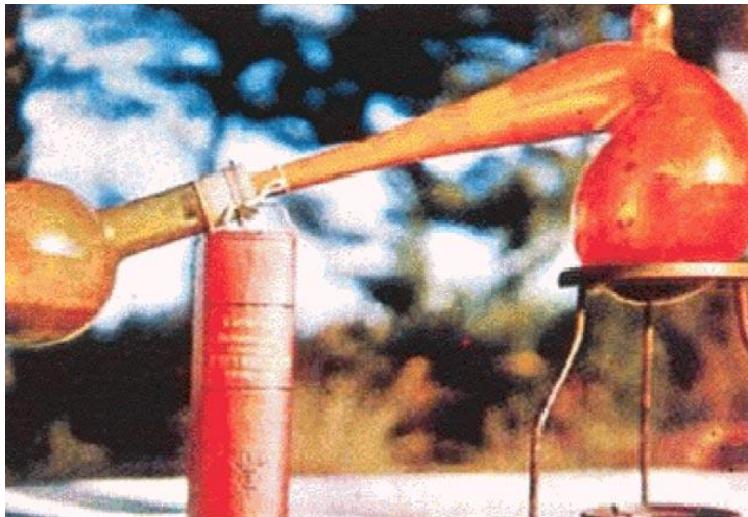
The Pope had accepted the Knights' explanation that the charges against them of sodomy and blasphemy were due to a misunderstanding of arcane rituals behind closed doors which had their origins in the Crusaders' bitter struggle against the Muslims, or Saracens... These included "denying Christ and spitting on the cross three times"... these were intended to stimulate the kind of humiliation and torture that a Crusader might be subjected to by the Saracens if captured.

(R. Owen, "Vatican File Shows Pope Pardon Massacred Knights," London Times, 30 March 2002.)



Clandestine Grand Masters

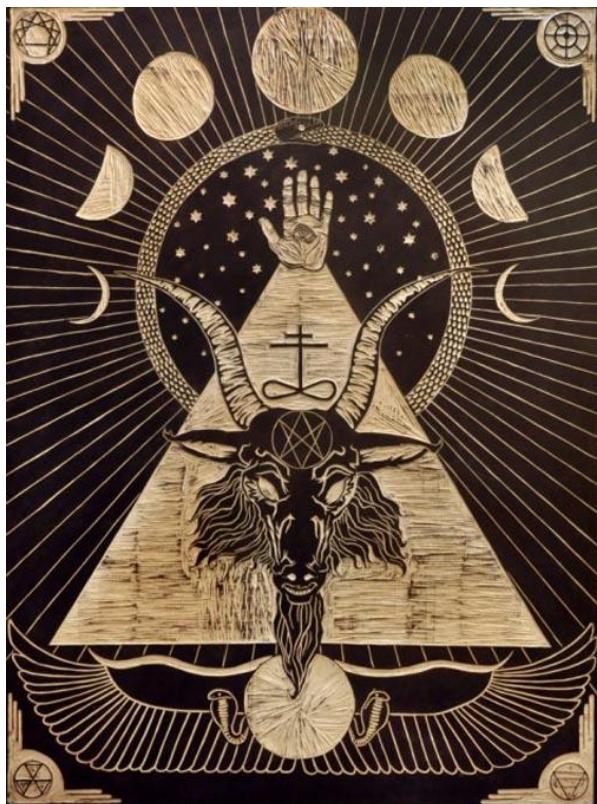
The clandestine Grand Masters were those that Bernard Raymond Fabré-Palaprat claimed succeeded Jacques de Molay and secretly preserved the Templar tradition. The list starts with Jean-Marc Larmenius (1313-1324), and ends with Bernard Raymond Fabré-Palaprat (1804-1838). (Twenty-four Grand Masters). There was an alternative list of Clandestine Grand Masters, promulgated fifty years earlier than Bernard Raymond Fabré-Palaprat's, by the Karl, Baron von Hund, a German Freemason. Von Hund claimed that the Order of the Temple had survived secretly in Scotland rather than France, and that Jacques de Molay had passed his authority to a Templar called Pierre d'Aumont rather than Jean-Marc Larmenius. He claimed to derive his knowledge from exiled Jacobites.



Alchemy and Hermeticism among the Templars

Until last decap, most academic historians have been reticent to openly study esoteric subjects as alchemy and Hermeticism. As a result, such topics with regard to the history of the Templars have more often been ignored. Today, times seem to be changing.

To be sure, certain tracts linking the Templars with alchemy and Hermeticism, especially those written by certain groups in eighteenth century (France), should be dismissed as propaganda. However, while proceed very cautiously, it is not scientific to merely disregard such subjects. Think of the Cardinals who refused to look into Galileo's telescope or the Protestant witch hunters who would not consider all of the evidence. Many Christians are known to have studied alchemy and Hermeticism, including some of the early Church Fathers. Due to secrecy, the Templars were not known as practicing alchemy. But, many churchmen did, Thomas Aquinas, Ramon Lull, Roger Bacon, Albertus Magnus, and Pope John XXII of Avignon, from there the Sovereign Order of the Elder Brethren Rose + Cross.



Agios Θ Baphomet

The End



© April 2013 –
Philippe L. De Coster, B.Th., D.D.,
Grand Master of the
Sovereign Order of the Elder Brethren Rose + Cross,
Gent, Belgium.



The Rules of the Sovereign Order of the Elder Brethren Rose ✚ Cross

Article 1

First of all, we state that if it happens in the future, the following statutes should be in need of some correction or reform, or if it seems profitable to make new ones, we will propose the matter to the Council and deliberate on these proposals following advice, and what has been deliberated to be reported to the Superior Imperator resident of this city to be approved by him if he sees it worth for publication with the recommended observations, and again that of the Council through elected ones, as to four or two, all Doctors in Alchemy.

Article 2

And, the so-called reformers and composers will swear between the hands of the said Superior to proceed in the stated composition of reformation in utter faithfulness with the aim the sole benefit and use of the public.

Article 3

Item, that these laws could be revoked for future use, in form, or contrary custom, for this reason we hold that against these laws one can never argue different usage, in form, custom or prescription even if it excess any human memory.

Article 4

And, at the end such statutes will be made known to everyone; the said Imperator will make them published in each and every Court, to be inviolably observed by all.

Article 5

We, Prince of the Church, baron, counts and knights representing the thirty-three companions of our Order, do profess to serve God by teaching and perpetuating the Holy Wisdom: Alchemy learned by Saladin and our Masters Ismailia's in the House of Wisdom at the time when we were still the Knights of Christ.

Article 6

Our new faith will spread throughout the Order of the Elder Brethren of the Rose Cross. Its present headquarter is now at the friary of the Brethren Pontiffs of Pont-Saint-Esprit where the rector former chaplain of the Temple prepares our Rules of the Order as decided by our Holy Father Pope John XXII.

Articles 7 and 8

We want a sovereign and secret order, not religious, but religious people may be headed. We make three vows: Charity, Simplicity, and Obedience.

Article 9

Each of the brothers will be an example to all humans. He will never complain about heaven, nor of the humans. He will respect the Princes who are accommodating him and defend their homeland if necessary. That no one wakes up at night without raising his soul to his Creator and the suffering creatures.

Article 10

In remembrance of the Ismail's Masters having taught us their Science, we perpetuate the Alchemy not to obtain gold treasures, since it demonstrates the unique Truth and provides the true Quintessence of Life.

Article 11

The Arms of our Order will be the Cross of the Saviour invented by Lady Queen Helene; the first Golden Rose blessed by our Holy Father Pope Innocent IV and given to one of the canons of Lyons of the Order of Saint Just, parent of a Templar chaplain, all wearing the red hat of Jacques de Via; finally, the Agnus Dei wearing the Cross of the Temple in recognition of the Commandery of London who saved us.

Article 12

Each Imperator can create a shield: the Pelican that opens the flank to give life to her young; the lion of King Richard and the Agnus Dei named above will be a mandatory part of these emblems. As to the fabulous animals and other alchemical items, they must come in the Seneschal's Arms, but in the meantime the Imperator will seal the seal of the Agnus Dei with the Templar Cross. This seal will always remain valid.

Articles 13

The Supreme Council of the Order will be composed as such:

A Imperator

A Seneschal

A Grand Commander

A Commander

A Major Hierophant

A Hierophant

A custodian of the "seals and tresors;"

Five Grand Masters

The twenty-one Brother Guides in the art of Alchemy, are not part of the Supreme Council.

Article 14

In addition to the three vows, each brother will make a promise to God. The number of Brothers will never exceed thirty-three and there will never be less.

Article 15

The Imperator is the supreme head of the Order's spiritual and temporal powers, and he will be the only one able to wear in his Arms the cardinal's hat above the cross; the pelican or the Agnus Dei or the Lion. The slogan will be "Pro cruce virtusque, virusque" or "Dium Sibi Ceteris" or "Fortune and misfortune are one."

Article 16

The Brothers will always work in secrecy so that their works are known only to God. They will use conventional symbols to correspond between them.

Article 17

Alchemical Teaching will be given free to people of all walks of life provided they are honourable and of good moral. There will be seven degrees.

Article 18

The Imperator will be elected by a majority of the Supreme Council during a Conclave and after the death of his predecessor. If some of the dignitaries were too

far away or sick, they could vote by messenger. In case of major force the Imperator may designate his successor during his lifetime. The Conclave would then meet to make an act of commitment.

Article 19

The Commandery of the Order will be held appointed by the Imperator. As our Head may belong to any Christian country, it follows that the Court will find itself very often in a difficult position. However, as a precaution we cannot carry indefinitely archives and treasures, the board will appoint several hiding places to shelter them.

Article 20

All the Brethren of the Council will be appointed by the Imperator: all positions are honorary and free. The twenty-one Brethren Guides will understand Alchemy. They will be appointed by the Grand Masters.

Article 21

The Brethren Guides will teach alchemy free of charge. They will make no claim for subsidies, nor money or other charges, but they will accept donations for the Order.

Article 22

No one may enter the Order with political, religious or commercial objectives.

Article 23

Alliance with another order cannot be decided unless by the Imperator after consulting the Great Council, but only the decision of the Imperator will be retained.

Articles 24 to 25

The Imperator has all authority except on two points:

- 1) Dissolve the Order
- 2) Change the number of Brothers who is thirty-three.

The Order cannot be dissolved unless the majority of thirty-three.

Article 26

Each Grand Master will appoint a committee whose mission is to help and advise him.

Article 27

The Committees will consist of:

A Grand Master

A Hierophant (Prior)

A Secretary

An Adviser

Article 28

The Grand Masters can create several committees.

Article 29

Twice a year the leaders of the Committee will send a message to the Imperator to keep him informed of the progress of its teaching..

Article 30

The Adeptship may be given by the Grand Masters or their deputies.

Article 31

The Adeptship will be conferred during a ceremony. A meal in common, made of bread without salt or leaven is to be taken together outside the ceremony.

Article 32

No Brother Guide can appoint his successor, not even the Superiors of the Supreme Council.

Article 33

The Adeptship may be given without ceremony in case of life or death, or if the Adept lives far from his consecrator.

Article 34

Each adept will pronounce the promise of the Sages, but not the three vows, reserved only for the Elder Brethren of the Rose & Cross.

Article 35

Only the Imperator will appoint his successor by will if he thinks the candidate is fit for the Order.

Article 36

A Grand Master may have multiple charges.

Article 37

The Grand Masters ensure under their sole responsibility that no one is neither political nor commercially engaged, in anything that binds the Order ... but each Brother (outside the Order) can do what he likes.

Article 38

The Brethren respect all faiths as God is present everywhere.

Article 39

The Order reserves the dismissal of a member in case of disobedience to its statutes.

Article 40

Any dispute will be judged by the Imperator.

Article 41

The decisions of the Imperator are final.

Article 42

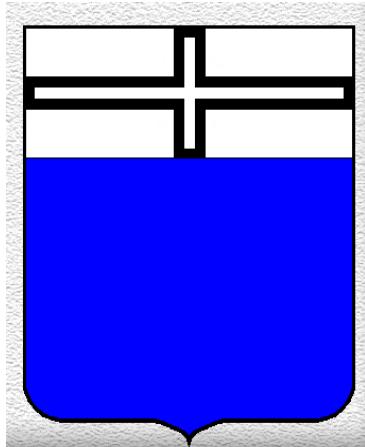
All array will fall when the times are come, when there will be wonders in the heavens and among the stars because of learned men and scholars, while there will be riots, as well as betrayed words; there will be many calamities and miseries; and,

that there will be more than four pontiffs still to come¹ as to our learned Irish Bishop Malachi.

Done and written on the instruct of Our Holy Father Pope Jehan XXII, the year one thousand three hundred and seventeen, the eve before the day of the baptism of our Glorious Lord Jesus Christ at the Friary of the Brethren Pontiffs of Pont-St-Esprit, by our venerable Rector and approved by Jacques de Via Imperator and by Della Revere Seneschal, who put their seals

Generalities to Remember

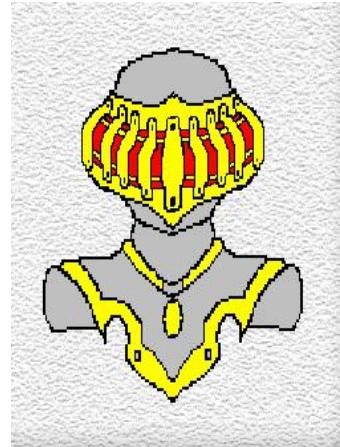
At the very heart of any Chivalrous Brotherhood whether it be the “Sovereign Order of the Elder Brethren Rose + Cross”; or “The Poor Knights of Christ, Guardians of the Holy Land”, being all Knight Templars from the Temple of Jerusalem, all had a shield, or they had a family coat of arms at the time of their investiture, or being made one with the help of a Heraldic designer and of the Judge of Arms of the Order. Whatever the origin of the shield, in a general way, the Order imposes an emblem to every new knight.



Example: "Full azure."
With the design of the
CCSM. At the time of
Crusades



A today's design



Helm of the Princes of Blood
as further explained.

¹ Meaning, probably the end of the calamities and miseries foreseen after the fourth Pontiff or Pope.

The Chivalry, as many things in the Medieval Times, has left its mark, regulated by customary laws. These customary laws have survived by bits and pieces. Nevertheless certain points are clarified either by historical facts, or by authors whose testimony cannot be doubted. So, we will review some of these customs.

Every man should receive the investiture to be knighted.

The armament of King Francis I by the Knight Pierre Terrail, Lord of Bayard, known as the Knight without fear and without reproach was held September 15, 1515, though he was crowned on January 25 of the same year, proves that even a king cannot call himself "Knight" if he has not bowed the knee before another Knight to receive the Knighthood.

The Rank of the Knight

Customs confirm that the Knights take precedence over non-knights, be they even Blood Princes, where it concludes that the Knights had the rank of "Prince of Blood". In our time, the only mark that we keep of this customary "rank" lays in the fact that our arms are surmounted by the helmet of the Princes of Blood.

Chivalry is eternal

Once one has been invested in the Chivalry, he remains Knight until his death. There is only one Court of Honour that can, in case of felony, remove a person from Chivalry. However, it is still necessary that the court is independent and free from any pressure or coercion.

Felony

We felt appropriate to remember the different causes of felony at the end to ensure that, as so often in the past, we would put this charge to various reasons, and it must be confessed, often with reasons "it suits me that way". So here follows what says the custom:

Felony or infidelity, disloyalty, crime is abusive and violent action of the knight to his Lord, which entails penalty. Felony is also committed by a Lord to his knights and underlings when he offends them. Thus, felony is an offense and crime committed by the knight to his Lord, and the Lord respectively to his knight.

Treachery of a knight or underling to his Lord.

The knight or underling is guilty of a felony in the following ways:

- When he maliciously put the hand on his Lord.
- When he mistreats and vexes his Lord with insulting words.
- When he works out his death or dishonour.

- When he evades his obligations and counselling.
- When he evades his obligation to military service.

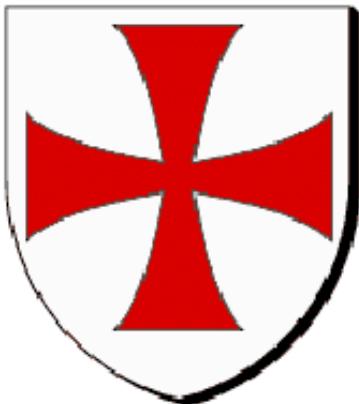
We will add one that kills off service; and, the one that was stricken by national indignity.

Felony of the Lord to his knight or underling

The Lord is guilty of a felony when he breaches his duty of protection and friendship to his knight or subordinate. The superiority he has on his knight or underling causes no freedom for violence and crime as Lord over his subordinate.



The Grand Masters of the Temple of Jerusalem



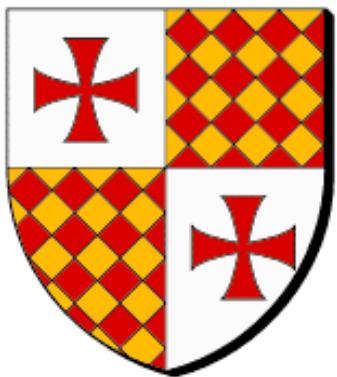
Here commences the list of Knights who have succeeded in the direction of the Order as Grand Masters elected by the Knights, leaders of the Order; or maybe either as Lieutenant Magister of the Order in absence of the Grand Master or, finally, as Regent "ad interim" assuming the regency at the request of the Grand Master during an impediment of the last.

Hugues de Payens

(C. 1170-1136)



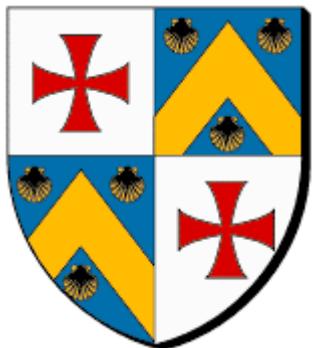
Hugues de Payns is, in all likelihood, born at the Castle of Payns (France). Along the timeline of the Masters of the Temple is suggested that he was born around the year 1070 and related to the family of the Counts of Champagne but nothing is known of his parentage or his childhood. It may be that Hugues de Payns is a descendant of the Carolingian Hildemar, possessor of land in Payns. Presumably, and only by comparison with other young nobility of his time, he was major at the age of fourteen, then squire of a knight in his neighbourhood, may be of the Count of Champagne himself, and finally became himself a knight. He received his fief either from the Payns, or inherited from his father along the usage which began in the tenth century, or directly from the Count of Champagne.



Robert de Craon

(C. 1100-c.1147)

Robert de Craon became the second Grand Master of the Knights Templar in 1136. Although known as 'the Burgundian', he was born in Anjou, and was a younger son of Renaud de Craon. He had given up a fiancée in Aquitaine to join the newly formed Order in Jerusalem, serving under Hugues de Payens. He was also present at the Council of Troyes. He oversaw the continuing growth of the Order and saw it gain extensive privileges when as a result of the Papal Bull Omne Datum Optimum. Robert participated in some inconclusive campaigns against the forces of Aleppo in the Holy Land. He was succeeded by Everard des Barres, who arrived from France with the forces of the Second Crusade.

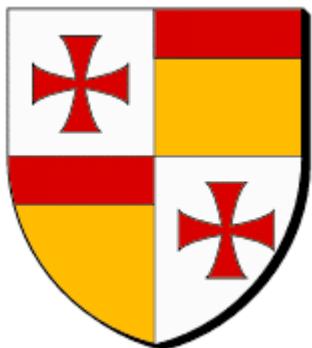


Everard des Barres

(Died 1174)

Everard des Barres was the third Grand Master of the Knights Templar. From an aristocratic family of Meaux, Champagne, he entered the Order in his teens, and by 1143 had risen to the rank of Grand Preceptor of France. He was chosen to lead the order on the death of Robert de Caron. He was close to King Louis VII of France and accompanied him on the Second Crusade, soon after his elevation in 1147. The embarkation followed a chapter meeting held in Paris, attended by King Louis, by Pope Eugenius III and by 120 Knights of the Temple, including some summoned by Everard from Spain. It was probably at this meeting that the Order received the right to wear the red cross of martyrdom on their white habits. Everard returned to France with the King after the ignominious end of the Crusade, apparently stricken with guilt over the failure of the venture. He resigned from the Templars in around 1151, and joined the Cistercian Order at Clairvaux in order to do penance.

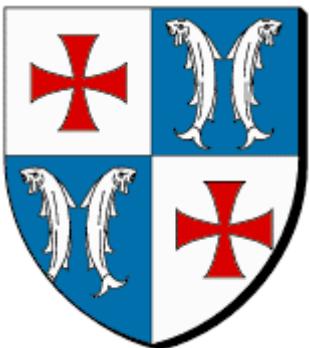
He was replaced as Grand Master by Bernard de Tremelay.



Bernard de Tremelay

(Died 1153)

Bernard de Tremelay was the fourth Grand Master of the Knights Templar. He was elected following the abdication of Everard des Barres, and led the Order in the aftermath of the unsuccessful Second Crusade. Bernard was probably a Burgundian, from a family originating near Dijon. Bernard and the Templars supported King Baldwin III of Jerusalem in his 1153 campaign against Ascalon, the only coastal town still in Muslim hands. A preliminary to this had been the strengthening of the castle at Gaza, which the Templars had taken over. This had severed Ascalon's land connection to Egypt. The Christians laid siege to Ascalon itself on 23 January 1153. Bernard de Tremelay had a wooden siege tower built and moved it close to the walls. The Egyptian defenders of the city succeeded in setting this on fire, but the wind changed direction, carrying the flames towards Ascalon. The walls themselves came crashing down. According to the chronicler William of Tyre (who was seldom one to ascribe the best motives to the Knights Templar) the Templars rushed into the breach without the King's knowledge, while Bernard de Tremelay prevented the other Crusaders from following, hoping to keep the greater part of the plunder. If so it was foolish over-confidence, for the next day the Egyptians hung the beheaded bodies of the Grand Master and forty of his men over the ramparts. The Christians fought on and the city fell to Baldwin soon after. Meanwhile André de Montbard succeeded as Grand Master of the Temple.



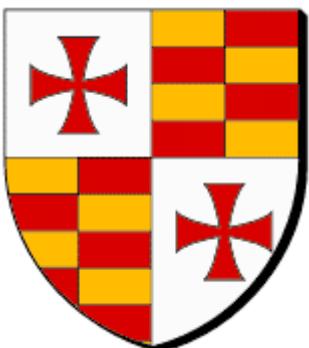
André de Montbard

(1103-1156)

André de Montbard was a Burgundian of noble birth. He was one of the early members of the Knights Templar. He went on to become fifth Grand Master of the Order, presiding between 1153 and 1156.



André was a younger son of Bernard, Lord of Montbard and Humberge de Ricey. André's brother Rainard succeeded to the title. André was also an uncle of Bernard of Clairvaux, Bernard apparently being the son of André's much older half sister Aleth. André's access to St Bernard and Bernard's influence within the Catholic Church helped ensure the official recognition of the Templars at the Council of Troyes. André apparently arrived in Europe some time before the other founding Templars, charged with gaining support for the Holy Land and negotiating with Fulk V, Count of Anjou, to come East to marry Melisende, the heiress to the kingdom of Jerusalem. André returned to the Holy Land, and served as Seneschal of the Order under Everard des Barres, to whom he wrote while the Grand Master was absent in France, urging his return with additional knights and money. André also served under Bernard de Tremelay. He participated in the capture of Ascalon from the Egyptians in 1153. He was elected Grand Master after de Tremelay perished there.



Bertrand de Blanquefort

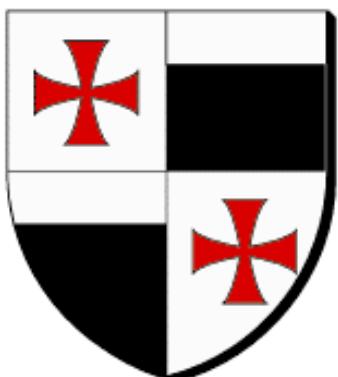
(1109-1169)

Bertrand de Blanquefort (or Blanchefort/Blancfort) was elected as the sixth Grand Master of the Knights Templar in 1156. He presided during the reign of Baldwin III, and seems to have been one of the first Grand Masters to use the symbol of the two riders on his official seal. Blanquefort is known for extending and revising the Templars' Rule, adding a number dealing with specifically military situations and the hierarchy of the Order, which had by this



time become more complex. (The original Rule had been primarily concerned with monastic living.)

In 1159 Bertrand de Blanquefort was captured by the Sultan Nur ed-Din of Damascus, after being ambushed by the Saracens in the Jordan Valley.

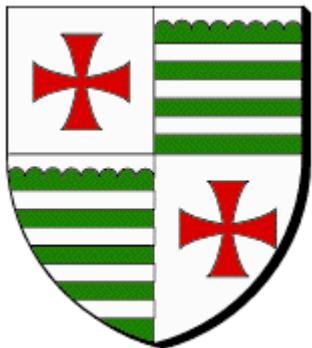


Philip de Milly of Nablus

(Died 1178)

Philip of Nablus was the Lord Nablus, and then of Oultrejordan, holding the castle of Kerak. He would become a Templar Grand Master. Philip was son of Guy de Milly, a Crusader from Picardy. He was well connected, being a step-brother of the lord of Ramla, and brother in law of Barisan of Ibelin, who was married to his sister Helvis. Philip became an influential baron in the Kingdom of Jerusalem. He was loyal to Queen Melisende, and formed part of her response to the fall of Edessa in 1144, at a time when Baldwin III was being sidelined for political reasons. Later, Philip fought alongside Baldwin and the Knights Templar at the capture of Ascalon. He is said to have been a gifted linguist, knowing French, Latin, Arabic and Armenian. At some point he also made a pilgrimage to the Monastery of Saint Catherine of Alexandria in the Sinai. He joined the Templars himself some time before 1166, probably after the death of his wife Isabella. In 1169 he was elected the Order's seventh Grand Master, succeeding Bertrand de Blanquefort. Philip was the first Grand Master to have been born in the orient. He probably led the Order during the defence of Gaza against an attack by Saladin. Philip resigned as Grand Master in 1171 for

reasons unknown. In his place Odo de St Amand was elected. Philip then became a royal envoy, to Constantinople. Philip's daughter Stephanie de Milly was remarried to Reynald de Châtillon, upon his release from a Nur ed-Din's dungeons. Reynald thus became lord of Kerak.



Eudes or Odo de St Armand

(Died 1180)

Odo de St Amand hailed from an aristocratic family of Limousin. He came east and served as Marshal of Jerusalem, before joining the Knights Templar. Odo went on to become the eighth Grand Master of the Templars in 1171, during the reign of Amalric I of Jerusalem. He succeeded Bertrand de Blanquefort, with whom he apparently had been captured and held prisoner after the battle of Banyas, against Nur ed-Din. Relations between the Order and the King continued to be difficult, and the troubles came to a head in 1172, when the Templar Walter de Mesnil ambushed an envoy of the Assassin sect, returning to Syria from negotiations with Amalric.

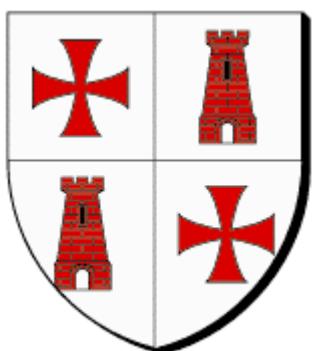
William of Tyre, recording his capture, expressed little sympathy, and condemned Odo as an evil man, full of pride and arrogance 'in whose nostrils dwelt the spirit of fury'. He also claimed that many held Odo responsible for the military disaster. Odo refused to be ransomed, in accordance with the Rule, and died in chains in prison the following year. He was succeeded in his absence by Arnold de Tarroja.



The Assassins:

A Radical Sect in Islam

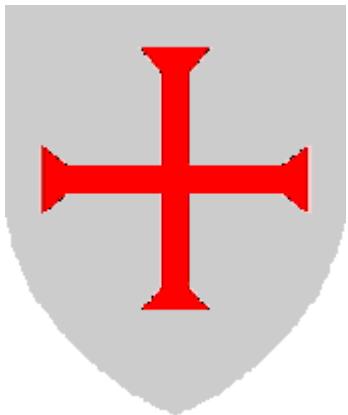
The word 'Assassin' was brought back from Syria by the Crusaders, and in time acquired the meaning of murderer. Originally it was applied to the members of a Muslim religious sect - a branch of the Ismailis, and the followers of a leader known as the Old Man of the Mountain. Their beliefs and their methods made them a by-word for both fanaticism and terrorism in Syria and Persia in the 11th and 12th centuries, and the subject of a luxuriant growth of myth and legend. Today the situation is not different in Syria, masses fighters and civilians are killed.



Arnold de Tarroja

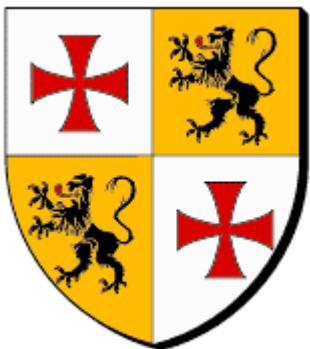
(Died 1184)

Arnold de Tarroja was elected the ninth Grand Master of the Knights Templar in about 1180. Taking advantage of a two-year truce agreed between Baldwin IV and Saladin, Arnold set out to tour the courts of Europe to appeal for support for the Holy Land. He had been dispatched by a council in Jerusalem along with the Heraclius, the Patriarch of Jerusalem, and Roger Grand Master of the Hospitallers. They hoped especially to secure the support of Henry II of England (who had sworn to take the Cross as part of his penance for his part in the death of Thomas à Becket.) However Arnold of Tarroja fell sick, and died before he could get any further than Verona. His companions had to carry on without him.



John of Terric (Jean de Terric) 1184 – 1188

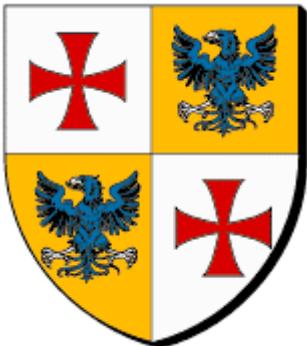
John de Terric or Thierry or Thérence is a mystery to the historians of the Templar Order. Has he been elected Grand Master, or has he not been, like in his letters to the Pope and to the King of England, calling himself as "Grand Preceptor of the house of the Temple in Jerusalem"? Probably, he has been temporarily elected waiting for the official resignation or death of the Grand Master of Arnaud de Toroge. He is placed between Arnaud de Toroge and Gerard de Ridefort.



Gerard de Ridefort

(Died 1189)

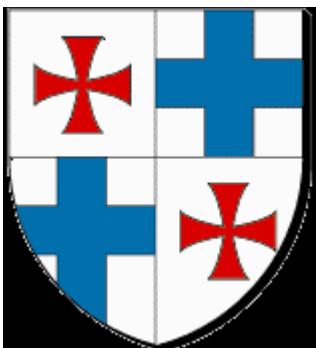
Gerard de Ridefort (or van Ruddervoorde) was the tenth Grand Master of the Knights Templar. He presided at the time of the disasters that befell the Kingdom of Jerusalem in and around 1187. He was an ally of Guy de Lusignan, Queen Sibylla and Reynald de Chatillon. Gerard has been portrayed as a sinister firebrand and a warmonger of the same cast as Reynald, pursuing policies and tactics inconsistent with the best interests of the Kingdom. He did not seem to lack personal courage, however, and perhaps if he had been blessed with more luck he would be better thought of. Still, given his clearly immoderate nature, it is difficult to account to his rise to the top of the Order of the Temple, especially considering that he was not a career Templar. Gerard was probably of Flemish extraction.



Robert de Sablé

(Died 1193)

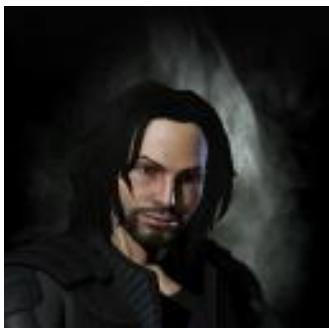
Robert de Sablé was a widowed Knight from Maine, France, and an Angevin vassal. He was lord of Brillary and La Suze. He fought under Richard the Lionheart during the Third Crusade. He was formerly commanded a division of Richard's a close associate of the King. Richard's support helped gain Robert the position of Grand Master of the Temple (the eleventh) in 1191, though he had only recently entered the Order. He succeeded Gerard de Ridefort, and led the Order at the capture of Acre. He also presided over the Order's short-lived acquisition of Cyprus, dispatching twenty knights and their retainers to govern the island. He was eventually succeeded by Gilbert Horal.



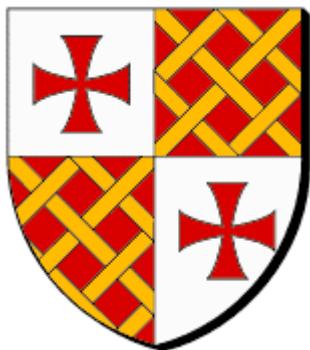
Gilbert Eralil

(1152-1200)

Gilbert Eralil (or Erill or Horal) was a Templar from Aragon. He had joined in his teens and risen to be Master of the Temple in the Aragon and Provence, and had seen action in the Reconquista as well as in the Holy Land. He became the twelfth Grand Master, succeeding Robert de Sable in around 1194. Unlike Gerard de Ridefort, Gilbert Eralil favoured peaceful relations with the Muslims. This caused tension between the Templar and the Hospitallers who at this time were the more militant party. Gilbert's conciliatory policy towards the Muslims also set him at odds with Pope Innocent III and the more militant of the Catholic clergy who wanted eternal war against the infidel. The Bishop of Sidon excommunicated Gilbert. However the Pope overturned this



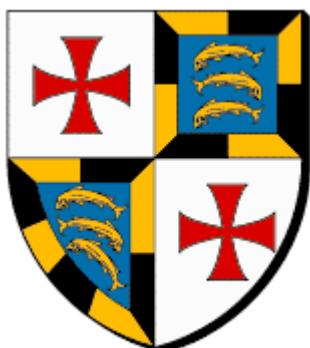
excommunication, on the basis that only Popes had the authority to excommunicate a Templar, and because it created a scandal. Gilbert died in December 1200 and was eventually succeeded by Philip de Plessiez.



Philip de Plessiez

(1165-1209)

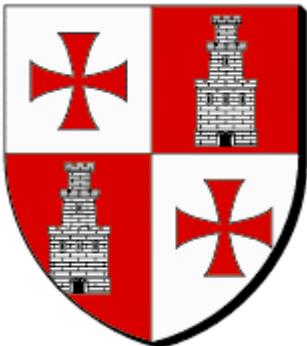
Philip de Plessiez was a knight from the region of Anjou. He may have been born in the castle of Plessis-Macé near Angers. He participated in the Third Crusade as a secular knight, and at some point thereafter joined the Knights Templar. He became the thirteenth Grand Master in early 1201. He kept the Templars out of the Fourth Crusade, perhaps anticipating that it would be hijacked by the Venetians and diverted against Byzantium. Philip was in favour of continuing the diplomatic policy of Gilbert Erail, and extending the peace treaty with the Muslims, which had ended the Third Crusade, much to the anger of Pope Innocent III and his legates. Philip did, however, launch an expedition to recover the castle of Baghras from the Armenians.



Guillaume de Chartres

(Died 1219)

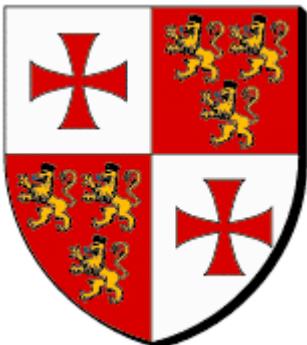
Guillaume de Chartres became the fourteenth Grand Master of the Knights Templar in 1209. He was probably born into the nobility of the Champagne region, and became a Templar in Sours, near Chartres, in around 1200. As Grand Master he was best known for building the impregnable fortress known as Pilgrims' Castle. He died of fever in 1219 during the Crusaders' siege of Damietta in Egypt, the first major engagement of the Fifth Crusade. He was succeeded by Peter de Montaigu.



Peter de Montaigu

(Died 1232)

Peter (Pierre, or Pedro) de Montaigu became the fifteenth Grand Master of the Knights Templar in 1219. He succeeded Guillaume de Chartres as who died of fever during the siege of Damietta during the Fifth Crusade. Peter had been the Master of the Temple in Provence and Aragon, and had fought at the Battle of Las Navas de Tolosa. Peter de Montaigu was the brother of Garin de Montaigu, who was Grand Master of the Hospitallers from 1208-1228. This was the only time when two members of the same family presided over the two leading Military Orders. It secured some years of harmonious relations between them. During the Sixth Crusade, Peter became a bitter enemy of the Emperor Frederick II who ratified the return of Jerusalem in a treaty with al Kamil in a treaty without the Grand Masters' seal. Peter and the Templars were suspected of plotted against Frederick, who retaliated by besieging them in Acre.



Armand de Périgord (1178-1244 or 1247)

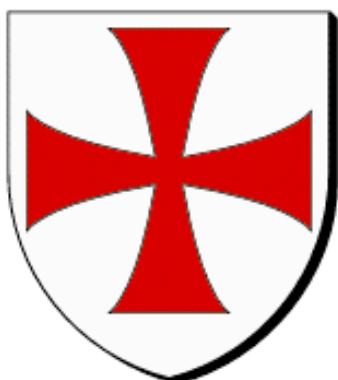
Armand de Périgord (or Hermann de Pierre-Grosse) (1178–1247?) was a descendant of the Counts of Périgord and a Grand Master of the Knights Templar.

He was master of the Province of Apulia and Sicily from 1205 to 1232. In 1232, he was elected Grand Master of the Templars. He organized attacks on Cana, Safita, Sephoria and Praetoria, and against the Muslim positions around the Sea of Galilee. All of these expeditions were failures and diminished the Templars' effectiveness.

In 1236, on the border between Syria and Cilicia, 120 knights, along with some archers and Turcopoles, were ambushed near the town of Darbsâk (Terbezak). In the first phase of the battle, the Templars reached the town but they met fierce resistance. When

reinforcements from Aleppo arrived, the Templars were massacred. Fewer than twenty of them returned to their castle in Bagras, fifteen km from the battle.

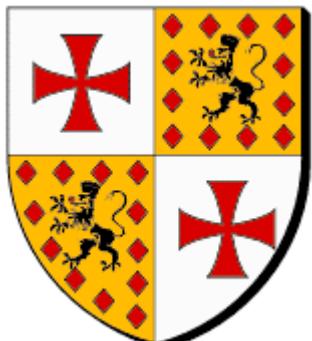
In September 1239, Armand arrived at Acre. He made a treaty with Sultan of Damascus, in parallel with the Hospitaller treaty with the Sultan of Egypt. In 1244 the Sultan of Damascus demanded that the Templars help repel the Khwarezmians from Asia Minor. In October 1244, the Templars, Hospitallers and Teutonic Knights, together with the Sultan of Damascus, confronted the Sultan of Egypt and his Khwarezmian allies at the Battle of La Forbie. The Christian-Muslim coalition was defeated, with more than 30,000 deaths. Some Templars and Hospitallers reached Ascalon, still in Christian hands. Armand de Périgord may have been killed during the battle, or may have been captured and survived until 1247.



Richard de Bures

(Died 1247)

Richard de Bures (or des Barres) was probably the seventeenth Grand Master of the Knights Templar, elected in 1244, and succeeding Armand de Perigord, who was either killed or captured at the Battle of La Forbie. Little is known about this period in the Order's history and Richard is omitted from some lists of Grand Masters. He was succeeded by Guillaume de Sonnac.



Guillaume de Sonnac

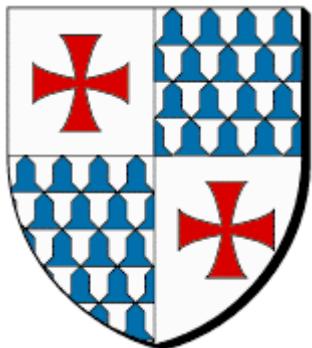
(Died 1250)

Guillaume de Sonnac became the eighteenth Grand Master of the Knights Templar. He was elected in a general chapter held in Pilgrim's Castle in 1247. He led the Order during the Seventh Crusade, under King Louis IX. He and the Templars rode in the vanguard of the crusade as it moved south from

captured Damietta, ahead of the main body of the crusade, along with Robert, Count of Artois and an English detachment under William Longespee.

The advance party attacked a Muslim camp under Fakhr al-Din and routed the defenders. Then, over confident, the Count of Artois decided to pursue the enemy into the town of Mansourah itself without waiting on the rest of the Crusaders. De Sonnac and Longespee counselled against it, (according to the version of events recorded by Matthew Paris) but Count Robert goaded them with accusations of cowardice and treachery and then charged against the town. De Sonnac and Longespee followed. The Mameluks used a variation of their standard tactic-feigning a retreat and then springing an ambush. They fell back through the narrow streets. When the Crusaders followed, the Muslims shut off their escape route then sprang on them from the side streets. The knights were unable to manoeuvre to defend themselves. Longespee and the Count of Artois and some three hundred other knights were killed in the ensuing bloodbath. De Sonnac and one other Templar made it out alive, though the de Sonnac had been wounded and lost an eye.

By this time Louis arrived and after fierce fighting drove the Mameluks back into the town. Over the following weeks they established a fortified camp below Mansourah, making a rampart from captured Egyptian siege engines. The Mameluks launched out in a sortie against the Crusaders' camp, supported by numerous archers and catapults throwing Greek fire on the Crusaders' wooden bastion, which caught fire. Seeing that the Templars were few in number the, Mameluks dashed through the collapsing structure. And though they were repelled Guillaume de Sonnac, leading the remaining Templars, lost first his remaining eye and then his life. Guillaume was replaced as Grand Master by Reynald de Vichiers.

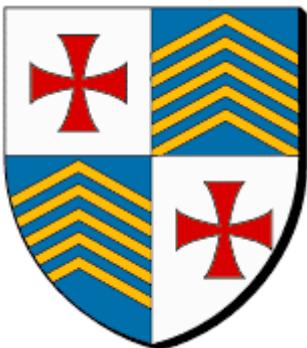


Reynald de Vichiers

(Died 1256)

Reynald de Vichiers became the nineteenth Grand Master in 1250 after the death of Guillaume de Sonnac at Mansourah in Egypt, during the Seventh Crusade. Previously he had been Marshal of the Temple, and had contributed to the preparation of the Crusade, arranging shipping for Louis IX's armies. Reynald soon proved his worth as a redoubtable warrior, with an independent streak. Jean de Joinville's chronicle recalls how on the march south from Damietta, King Louis IX had ordered that none was to break formation in the face of enemy harassment. Then one of the Muslims gave a Knight Templar in the first rank so heavy a blow with his battle-axe that it felled him under the hooves of Reynald de Vichiers's horse. The marshal cried out: 'At them in the name of God for I cannot longer stand this!' He spurred his horse at the enemy, followed by his brethren, and, as the Templars' horses were fresh and the Turks' already weary, not a single enemy escaped.

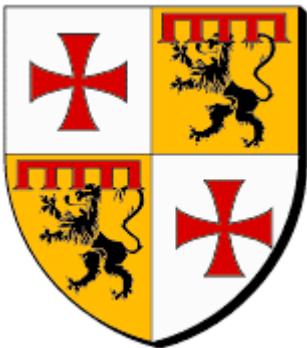
Reynald de Vichiers accompanied Louis IX to the Acre, following the defeat in Egypt. There, with Louis's backing, he was confirmed as the Grand Master. He acted as godfather to a son born to Louis and Marguerite of Provence, (born within Pilgrims Castle). Relations later deteriorated, when Louis started to feel that the Templars had overstepped their authority, negotiating independently with Damascus. The king decided to make an example of the Order, compelling Reynald de Vichiers to exile from the Holy Land Hugues de Jouy, the new Marshall of the Order, who was made a scapegoat. The king subsequently tried to curtail the Order's independence. Reynald de Vichiers also had to kneel before the King publicly and apologize. Reynald was ultimately succeeded by Thomas Berard.



Thomas Berard

(d. 1273)

Thomas Berard became the twentieth Grand Master of the Templars in 1256. It was he who sent word to Europe of the threat from the advancing Mongols, who had blazed their way across the Middle East. He reported their atrocities and predicted that unless help was given a horrible annihilation was inevitable. Berard presided at the time when the Mameluks under Baybars were putting great pressure on the Crusader States, especially the Principality of Antioch. While based in Acre, Berard heard of the fall of Antioch, and that Bagras was under siege. Unable to send relief, and knowing that the castle could not withstand the siege, Berard sent a message ordering the beleaguered brethren there to surrender and withdraw to la Roch Guillaume. It was found that the garrison had already surrendered. Berard did not have them permanently expelled, but held them to account, especially for failing to destroy everything before departing.



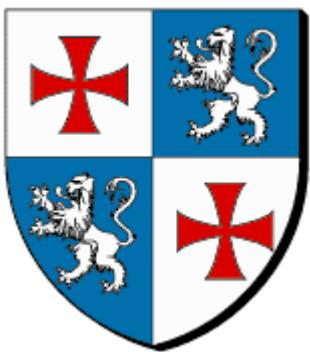
Guillaume de Beaujeu

(C.1230-1291)

Guillaume de Beaujeu, aka **William of Beaujeu**, was the 21st Grand Master of the Knights Templar, from 1273 until his death during the siege of Acre in 1291. He was the last Grand Master to preside in Palestine.

During his tenure the new Mamluk Sultan, Qalawun, easily conquered in 1289 the County of Tripoli, which had ignored Beaujeu's warnings. In 1290 Qalawun marched on Acre, the capital of the remnant of the Kingdom of Jerusalem, but died in November before launching the attack. His son Al-Ashraf Khalil, however, decided to continue the campaign. Beaujeu led the defence of the city.

At one point during the siege, he dropped his sword and walked away from the walls. His knights remonstrated. Beaujeu replied: "Je ne m'enfuis pas; je suis mort. Voici le coup." ("I'm not running away; I am dead. Here is the blow.") He raised his arm to show the mortal wound he had received. Beaujeu died of his wound and the city fell to the Mamluks, signalling the end of Crusader occupation of the Holy Land.

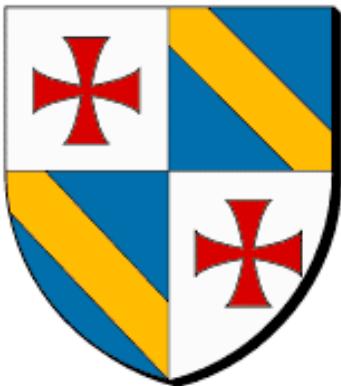


Theobald Gaudin

(Died c.1293)

Theobald Gaudin was a Knights Templar who had served in the Order for 30 years. He had held the ranks of Turkopolier and Preceptor of Acre (Grand Preceptor). Acre had fallen under the massive onslaught of al-Ashraf Khalil and his Mameluk forces in May 1291.

While still serving under Guillaume de Beaujeu, Theobald had attempted in vain to prevent a violent clash between Pisan and Genoese parties in Acre. However he and the Grand Master had succeeded in preventing some captive Pisan sailors being sold into slavery. Gaudin was elected the twenty-second (and penultimate) Grand Master of the battered remnants of the Order of the Temple, after the deaths of de Beaujeu and Peter de Sevrey in the battle. Theobald escaped from Acre by sea, three days before the final fall of the Templars' fortress, sailing to Sidon with the Order's treasure. In the month after the fall of Acre, Tyre had surrendered and Sidon seemed hardly defensible. Gaudin withdrew to Cyprus, intending to return to Sidon with reinforcements. However the Templars seem to have been demoralised, and soon Sidon, Beirut and the fortresses of Tortosa and even Pilgrim's Castle were also abandoned. Only the garrison on Arwad remained, off shore from Tortosa. The mainland was entirely lost. Gaudin was succeeded on Cyprus by Jacques de Molay.



Jacques de Molay

(C.1245-1314)

Jacques de Molay (or Molai) was the twenty-third and last Grand Master of the Knights Templar, and is one of the best known on account of the circumstances of his death in Paris.

De Molay was a relation of the Lords of Longwy in Franche-Comte. He was initiated into the Order in around 1266, in the Preceptory of Beune near Autun, according to his Chinon confession, and was received by Humbert de Pairaud (the father of Hugues de Pairaud). In 1291 he possibly fought at the siege of Acre, and two years later on Cyprus was elected Grand Master. De Molay was one of the foremost advocates of action to recover the Holy Land. He visited Rome, Paris and London, in 1294, raising support and gathering a new Templar force. Back in the Levant he sought alliances with the Mongols and Armenians, and strengthened the garrison on the island of Arwad. De Molay even purchased six war galleys from Venice with a view to invading Tortosa, and re-establishing a Christian foothold in Syria. The operation ended in costly failure, though, when Arwad itself was lost a Mameluk invasion fleet of sixteen galleys.

In 1306 de Molay was summoned from Cyprus by Pope Clement V. He and Fulk de Villaret, his opposite number in the Hospitallers, were invited to discuss plans for a new Crusade, and also a proposal to amalgamate the Orders of the Temple and the Hospital. De Molay prepared a paper on the subject, conceding that there would be some advantages to the proposed merger, but that on the whole it was a bad idea because the rivalry between the two orders was healthy and spurred them on to greater efforts in the Christian cause. Fulk kept quiet on the matter, but apparently felt the same. Meanwhile on the matter of a new Crusade both Grand Masters expressed the view that only a large scale Passagium generale

would succeed in re-establishing the Christian kingdom in the Holy Land.

De Molay went next to the Paris Temple. On 13 October 1307 he and his brethren were arrested there. This was with orders secretly issued a month before hand by King Philip the Fair, accusing the Templars of blasphemous crimes and heresy. De Molay had attended the funeral of the King's sister in law as a pallbearer only the day before the arrests however, and seems to have been taken by surprise when the raid came. De Molay was interrogated by Royal agents and the Inquisition, probably being held in the Templars' own dungeons at the Paris Temple. He was probably subjected to torture. On 24 October he confessed to some of the accusations- namely spitting on the Cross and denial of Christ. He would not, however, confess to homosexual practices. He was obliged to repeat his confession publicly the following day to the masters of the University of Paris, and also to urge his brethren likewise to confess. The Grand Master's early capitulation, forced as it may have been, did much to undermine the defence of the Order and was a propaganda coup for the Capetian authorities. It prejudiced the wider world against the Templars and lent credence to the astonishing accusations. It also made it impossible for the Pope to continue in a critical stance regarding the King's actions.

With the other leading Templars that had been captured, (Raymbaud de Caron, Hugues de Pairaud, Geoffroi de Charney and Geoffroi de Gonneville), Jacques De Molay was moved to the castle of Chinon. There these Templars again gave a partial confession to three Cardinals sent by the Pope, who afterwards bestowed absolution on them. All the Templar dignitaries except de Caron were subsequently brought back to Paris to testify at the tribunal called the Papal Commission.

Jacques de Molay retracted his confession at the end of the year. Over the following years, he wavered,

evidently worn down by his captivity. He offered little leadership to the Templars wishing to defend the Order, but at times seemed willing to assert the Order's honourable nature. He apparently remained imprisoned throughout 1310 when the Archbishop of Sens, Philip de Marigny incapacitated the Templars' defence at the Papal commission by taking and burning 54 Templars; and through 1312 when the Council of Vienne abolished the Order of the Temple and consigned it to oblivion. He and the three other dignitaries of the late Order were eventually brought out before an assembly of prelates (including Cardinal Arnold Novelli and Archbishop de Marigny), lawyers, university theologians and the public on 18 March 1314, and to hear their sentence of perpetual imprisonment. Hugues de Pairaud and Geoffroi de Gonneville persisted in their confessions and accepted their fate. Jacques De Molay, though, stunned his persecutors by making a lucid and passionate last minute defence of the Order. He was supported by Geoffroi de Charney.

The rebellious Templars were passed to the prévôt of Paris and flung back into jail. When the King learned what had happened, he went into a rage, and ordered the two Templars to be condemned as relapsed heretics. Before night fell they were taken to the Ille des Javiaux in the Seine, and burned to death. It was recorded that their courage and constancy impressed and surprised the onlookers. The next day, recorded the Chronicler Giovanni Villani, came friars and other religious persons, who gathered up the ashes of the Templar martyrs and carried them away to holy places.

Clandestine Grand Masters

The clandestine Grand Masters were those that Bernard Raymond Fabré-Palaprat claimed succeeded Jacques de Molay and secretly preserved the Templar tradition. This is the list of those who allegedly led the Templars over the five centuries following the suppression:

- 1313-1324 Jean-Marc Larmenius
- 1324-1340 Thomas Theobald of Alexandria
- 1340-1349 Arnaud de Braque
- 1349-1357 Jean de Claremont
- 1357-1381 Bertrand du Guesclin
- 1381-1392 Bernard Arminiacus
- 1419-1451 Jean Arminiacus
- 1451-1472 Jean de Croy
- 1472-1478 Bernard Imbault
- 1478-1497 Robert Leononcourt
- 1497-1516 Galeatus de Salazar
- 1516-1544 Phillippe Chabot
- 1544-1574 Gaspard de Galtiaco Tavanensis
- 1574-1615 Henri de Montmorency
- 1615-1651 Charles de Valois
- 1651-1681 Jacques Ruxellius de Granceio
- 1681-1705 Jacques Henri Duc de Duras
- 1705-1724 Phillippe, Duc d'Orleans (Philip II, Duke of Orleans)
- 1724-1737 Louis Augustus Bourbon
- 1737-1741 Louis Henri Bourbon Conde
- 1741-1776 Louis-Francois Bourbon Conti
- 1776-1792 Louis-Hercule Timoleon, Duc de Cosse Brissac (executed during the French Revolution)
- 1792-1804 Claude-Mathieu Radix de Chavillon
- 1804-1838 Bernard Raymond Fabre-Palaprat

The names up to Phillippe Duc d'Orleans are apparently signed on the controversial 'Larmenius Charter'.

There was an alternative list of Clandestine Grand Masters, promulgated fifty years earlier than Bernard Raymond Fabré-Palaprat's, by the Karl, Baron von Hund, a German Freemason. Von Hund claimed that the Order of the Temple had survived secretly in Scotland rather than France, and that Jacques de Molay had passed his authority to a Templar called Pierre d'Aumont rather than Jean-Marc Larmenius. He claimed to derive his knowledge from exiled Jacobites.

Alchemy and Hermeticism among the Templars

Until last decay, most academic historians have been reticent to openly study esoteric subjects as alchemy and Hermeticism. As a result, such topics with regard to the history of the Templars have more often been ignored. Today, times seem to be changing. To be sure, certain tracts linking the Templars with alchemy and Hermeticism, especially those written by certain groups in eighteenth century (France), should be dismissed as propaganda. However, while proceed very cautiously, it is not scientific to merely disregard such subjects. Think of the Cardinals who refused to look into Galileo's telescope or the Protestant witch hunters who would not consider all of the evidence. Many Christians are known to have studied alchemy and Hermeticism, including some of the early Church Fathers. Due to secrecy, the Templars were not known as practicing alchemy. But, many churchmen did, Thomas Aquinas, Ramon Lull, Roger Bacon, Albertus Magnus, and Pope John XXII of Avignon, from there the Sovereign Order of the Elder Brethren Rose ✚ Cross.



L'explication des caractères

Acer fer ou mars.	♂	Signe céleste.....	♀
Aimant.	○○	Cancer ou l'escrueffe-	
Air.	△	Signe céleste.....	69
Alambic.	XX	Cendres.....	HE
Alun.	O □	Cendres graueées.	□
Amalgame.	aaa # A	Chaux.....	C
Antimoine.	◇ ○	Chaux viue.....	Ψ
Aquarius ou verseau.		Cinnabre ou -	+
Signe Céleste.	~~~	vermeillon.....	□ O
Argent ou lune.	○○	Cire.....	○+○
Argent vif ou mercure	○	Creuset.....	† △
	○	Cuître calciné -	
Aries ou le belier signe- celeste.	Y	as exstum ou crocus- de .venis.....	⊕ € ○
Arsenic.	○○	♀ ○ 3.	
Bain.	B	Distiller.....	g
Bain marin ou bain-		Eau.....	~~~ ▽
marin.	M	Eau forte.....	V
Bain vaporeux ou bain de rosée.	WB	Eau regale.....	V V
Balance signe céleste.	—	Esprit.....	— ⊕
	—	Esprit de vin.	◊ ♦ ♦
Braz.	K ↗	E stain ou Iupiter.	U
Briques.	■	Farine de briques.	■
Caper ou Capricorne -		Feu.....	△

Symiques.

Gomme.	§§	Saffran de fer ou crocus- de mars.....	↑ ○ ↓
Heure.	○	Sagittaire signe céleste	†
Huille.	† ○ ○	Lour.....	○ ○
		Iumeaux signe céleste	II
Lion signe céleste.	§	Lit sur lit ou stratum super stratum	SS fff
		Marcassite.....	IV
Mercur precipite.	§	Mercur sublimé.	§
		Mois.....	□
Nitre ou salpetre.	○	Nuit.....	○ ○
Or ou soleil.	○	Orpiment.....	○○
Plomb ou saturne.	†	Plomb ou saturne.	†
Poissons signe céleste.	K	Poudre.....	‡
		Precipiter.....	—
Purifier.	○○	Quinte essence.....	QE
		Realgar.	§ ○ ○ X
Retorte, cornue.	○	Retorte, cornue.	○
Sable.	▲	Sable.....	▲
		Gomme.....	§§
		Heure.....	○
		Huille.....	† ○ ○
		Lour.....	○ ○
		Iumeaux signe céleste	II
		Lit sur lit ou stratum super stratum	SS fff
		Marcassite.....	IV
		Mercur precipite.	§
		Mercur sublimé.	§
		Mois.....	□
		Nitre ou salpetre.	○
		Nuit.....	○ ○
		Or ou soleil.	○
		Orpiment.....	○○
		Plomb ou saturne.	†
		Poissons signe céleste.	K
		Poudre.....	‡
		Precipiter.....	—
		Quinte essence.....	QE
		Realgar.	§ ○ ○ X
		Retorte, cornue.	○
		Sable.....	▲

Feuillet 153.

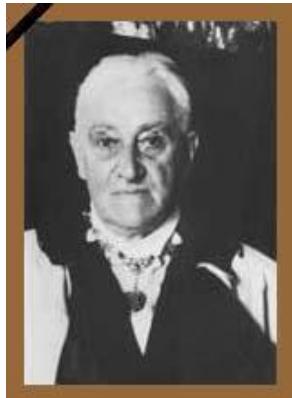
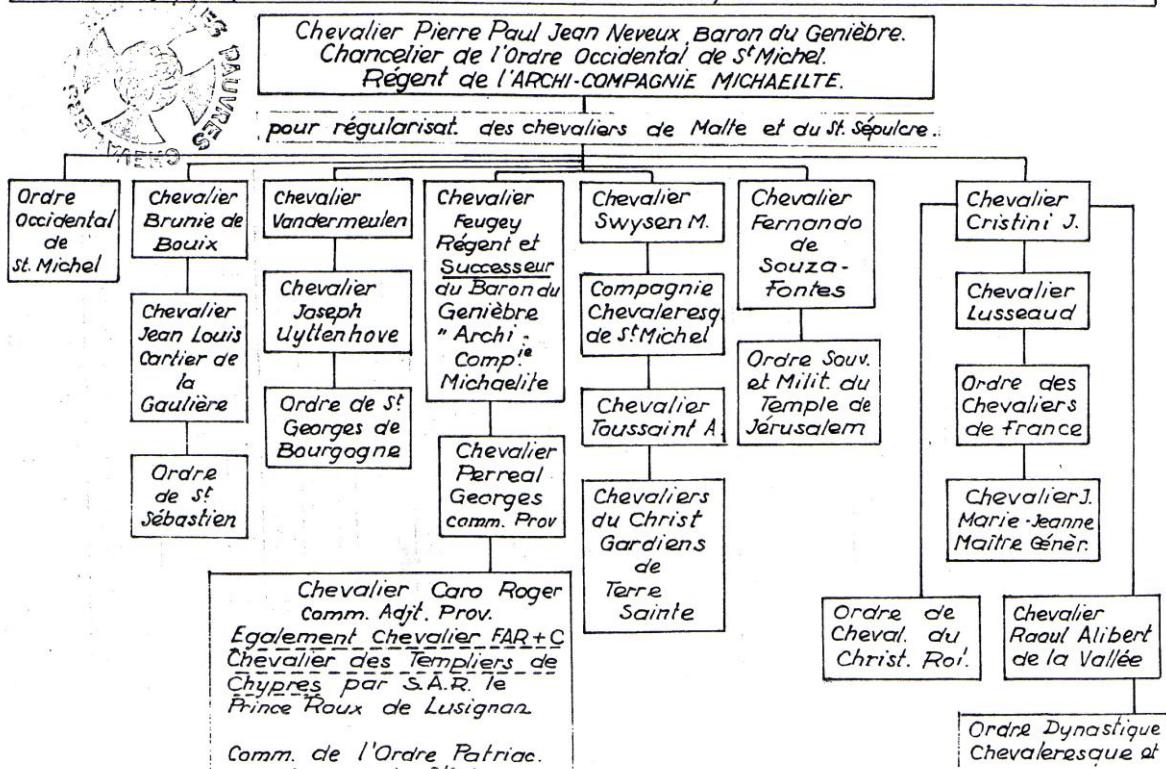
Saffran de fer ou crocus- de mars.....	↑ ○ ↓	Sel alKah.	□ X
Sagittaire signe céleste	†	Sel armoniac.	*
Sauon.....	◊	Sel commun.	⊖ ⊕ ⊖
Iumeaux signe céleste	II	Sel gemme.	◊ □
Lion signe céleste.	§	Soufre.....	† ▲
		Soufre noir.	○○
Lit sur lit ou stratum super stratum	SS fff	Soufre de phitophores.	▲
Marcassite.....	IV	Sublimer.	— ○ ○
Mercur precipite.	§	Talc.	X
Mercur sublimé.	§	Tartre.	□ Ψ X
Mois.....	□	Taureau signe céleste.	§
Nitre ou salpetre.	○	Terre.....	▽
Nuit.....	○ ○	Tête morte.	💀
Or ou soleil.	○	Tutie.	⊗
Orpiment.....	○○	Verre.....	○ —
Plomb ou saturne.	†	Vordet ou vert de gris.	⊕
Poissons signe céleste.	K	Vinaigre.....	× +
Poudre.....	‡	Vinaigre distillé.	⊗ X
Precipiter.....	—	Vitriol.	⊕ ⊖
Purifier.	○○	Vrine.....	□
Quinte essence.....	QE		
Realgar.	§ ○ ○ X		
Retorte, cornue.	○		
Sable.....	▲		

Contents

Preface	3
Brief History of the Crusades through a Different Eye	4
The Baphomet and the Templars	4
Misconceptions about the Crusades Clarified	5
Shields of Knights before they became Grand Masters	13
Baphomet (Illustrated panels)	17
The Rules of the Sovereign Order of the Elder Brethren Rose ✚ Cross	68
Generalities to Remember	74
The Grand Masters of the Temple of Jerusalem	77
Clandestine Grand Masters	96
Alchemy and Hermeticism among the Templars	97
Contents	97
Extra: Appendix – Summary of Lineages (and document)	100

Appendix – Summary of Lineages

Tableau synoptique des diverses investitures chevaleresques issues du Baron du Geniebre.



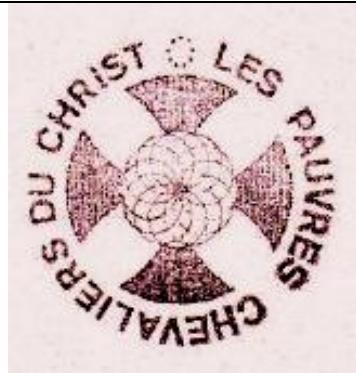
Paul Pierre Jean NEVEU, Baron de Geniebre

Armed in the Knighthood, 4th november 1937



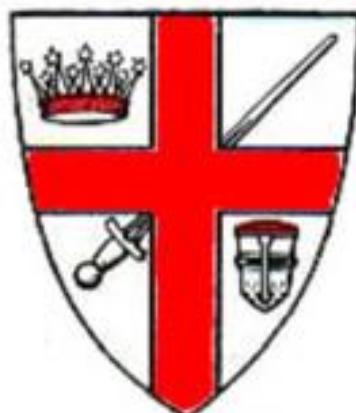
Michel Swysen, Comte d'Aijalon

Armed in the Knighthood, 13th May 1962



Armand Toussaint

Armed in the knighthood, 18th August 1979



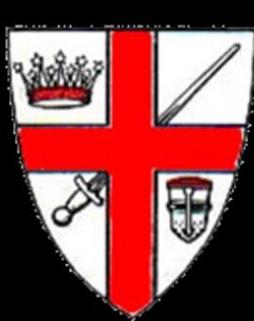
Philippe De Coster (Philippus-Laurentius)

Armed in the knighthood, 16th September 1979

Chevalier Grand ✑ Croix de Mérite de l'Ordre Souverain des
Frères Aînés de la Rose ✑ Croix

(Roux de Lusignan) le 15 mars 1975

As such, Philippus-Laurentius has all the chivalries of the
Poor Knights of Christ, and of O.S.F.A.R. ✑ C, Roux de
Lusignan (Kings of Cyprus) through Pierre Phoebus (Roger
Caro)



Philippus - Laurentius De Coster, B.Th., D.D.

Grand Master

of the

Sovereign Order of the Elder Brethren Rose + Cross

Order Souverain des Frères Aînés Rose + Croix

See also Ebook:

<http://www.scribd.com/doc/133875619/The-Knights-Templar-Yesterday-and-Today>

© May 2013 – O.S.F.A.R ✑ C - Ghent, Belgium

Non-Commercial Publication